

I.

Burmese Animism

or

Animism in Kengtung State,

B U R M A.

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Thesis for degree of Ph. D.



II.

Animism in Kengtung State,

B U R M A.

by

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### III.

#### Animism in Kengtung State, Burma.

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## PREFACE.

The material for this thesis I have collected during thirteen years of residence in Kengtung State, Burma. In the gathering of my materials I have been fortunate to have the co-operation of intelligent nationals, whose thorough knowledge concerning animistic beliefs and customs as found in Burma has fitted them in a peculiar way, to furnish reliable data.

While some books have been written about the Shans and Kachins, no books have been written concerning Animism as found among the Lahus and Kaws. This lack of written sources has perhaps made the task more difficult but none the less interesting. I hope that this thesis may be a helpful contribution to a fuller understanding of animistic religion.

Introduction.

## 1. The Geography of Kengtung State.

The State of Kengtung is the largest of that group of states known as the Southern Shan States, Burma, with an area twice as large as that of North and South Wales. It is situated in the extreme eastern section of Burma; its northern border is Yunnan Province, China; its southern boundary is Siam; east and west it is bounded by the Mekong and Salween rivers respectively. In the centre of the State is the capital, Kengtung town, in which quaint community is located the palace of the Sawbwa (Prince) who, under British supervision, is the sole ruler of this isolated but exceedingly interesting country.

Kengtung town is 2700 ft. above sea level, where as at precisely one hundred miles west, on the banks of the Salween river the altitude is just about 800 ft. Between the Salween and the capital city there are altitudes of over 6000 ft. Approaching Kengtung from the Burma side, the one and only road to the heart of the State leads through the tremendous mountain passes. The town of Kengtung is three hundred miles distant from the nearest Burma Railway station. Sixteen years ago when I travelled for the first time those three hundred miles ,

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the journey had to be made by pony and the distance seemed even longer. Stage by stage, it took three weeks to complete the trip, but now as the result of better communications, with motor cars, it is possible during the dry season to complete the journey in two or three days. Kengtung however, is more accessible from Siam. Lampan is reached from Bangkok by train in about twenty-four hours, and from Lampan to the border of Kengtung State there is a splendid motor road. From the Kengtung - Siam border to Kengtung town the distance is about one hundred miles, but as the motor road on the British side is not so good it takes a whole day for a motor car to cover the ground. Much of the Kengtung - Siam road lies through flat country at low levels. There are very few if any great mountain passes to be negotiated, whereas the road from the railway terminus in Burma to Kengtung, and especially the trans-Salween part of the road, leads through some dangerous mountainous country, where the slightest mistake might precipitously hurl the car from the narrow road into a ravine hundreds of feet in depth.

As to the topography of Kengtung State as a whole, the country is a succession of high mountains and

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of extensive plains. The fertile and expansive valleys, most of which are cultivated, are very beautiful when the rice is ripening. Some of the highest mountains of the State are found in the South and South-West districts, but there is no part of the State without its wooded or cultivated hills.

Kengtung State is bounded East and West by two of the world's great rivers, the Mekong and the Salween. These as well as the Yangtze river, are said to have their sources very near to each other in the deserts of Tibet. There is an abundance of smaller rivers throughout the State, which make it possible for the Shan farmers, who occupy the lowland fields, to introduce crude systems of irrigation for the cultivation of their rice crops. The rock surfaces indicate that the level of some of these rivers was once fifty to two hundred feet above the present level. Pine clad mountain ranges, peaceful but sometimes turbulent rivers, and expansive and fertile valleys, make Kengtung State one of the most beautiful countries of the world.

### 2. The Peoples of Kengtung State.

The predominant race of Kengtung State is the Shan. The Shans are sometimes called "Tai", but the Chinese call



them "Bai-yee". There are many tribes of Shan such as, Hkun, Lem, Lao, Leu and Yoon. They are the most numerous people of Kengtung State, and also the ruling race in all the Shan States of Burma. Moreover, there are many Shans in Yunnan, China, especially in the south-western section of the province, and in Kwang Hsi. Again, the Haut-Laos country of French-Indo-China is predominantly Shan, and northern Siam is mostly peopled by their stock. Thus widely scattered, and without a country which they can call their own, it is not surprising that the Shans have no sense of national unity.

The Shan has his own type of civilization. He is permanently and happily settled in the village community or township. He has definitely passed the nomadic stage, though it may be said that his roving instinct comes periodically to the surface, when, after the harvest of his crops, he starts off with mule or bullock caravan, more frequently the latter, on some trading expedition which may take him from his home for three or four months.

In religion the Shan is a Buddhist, and the Shan literature is almost wholly if not entirely of a

religious character. Throughout the State, there is in almost every village a Buddhist temple to which are attached Buddhist priests who are the religious leaders of the community, and also the instructors of the boys who daily attend the temple-school. Some of these temples are very ornate. The influence of a Chinese type of architecture is noticeable to the most casual observer. Many of the temples beautifully and worthily express the religious feeling and faith of the people, and the Shans love their temples, for to their places of worship they have not only given of their time, their labour, their money, but have even found in them a home for their souls.

Since the Shans are Buddhists, we shall not have much to say about their religion. It should, however, be kept in mind that the Shan is manifestly a convert from animistic belief and practice to Buddhism, and despite the fact that for centuries he has been a Buddhist, the inheritance from animism is still very much in evidence among his race. The break from animism was never complete. To the Shan there is no apparent inconsistency in his maintaining the two forms of religious faith; for to this present day the Shan is a Buddhist when he is well and an Animist when he is ill.

In addition to the Shans, who live in the fertile plains of Kengtung State, there are numerous hill tribes the most prominent of which are the Lahus and the Kaws; In addition there are the Tailoi or mountain Shan as they are sometimes erroneously designated. The Tailoi are in fact a branch of the Wa tribe, and are sometimes and correctly called "Kut Wa". The Shan word "Kut" means to be "left behind." The Tailoi are the remnants of the Wa tribe that were left behind in Kengtung State, when the Hkuns from Siam came and occupied the Kengtung country and drove the earlier inhabitants, the Wa, into the Chinese province of Yunnan.

The Tailoi though a hill people are Buddhists. With this exception all the other hill tribes of Kengtung State, such as the Wa, En, Lisu, Kachin, Lahu and Kaw are animists. The hill tribes are cultivators of highland fields. The technical term for this form of cultivation is "Taungya". In their search for food, those hill tribes are gradually denuding the timber forests of the mountains throughout the State. New tracts of virgin forest are cut down by them every year. When the giant trees have been felled, the trunks and branches are allowed to dry and wither in the sun and when thoroughly dry the mass of

timber is set on fire. The ash of the burned tree trunks and branches makes an excellent fertilizer which is dug in when the farmer prepares the soil on which he later sows his rice seed.

It is with the religious beliefs and customs of the Lahu, Kaw and Kachin tribes that we shall be concerned. . The original home of all three tribes is in China, and they are thus Mongolian in origin. In Kengtung State the Kaws are the most numerous of the hill tribes and the Kachins the smallest numerically. The Kaws call themselves Aka, while the Government designate the Lahus as Muhso or hunters. At the present time the Lahu tribe is most numerous in Yunnan in China, from Mung Lem and North to Meng Meng. The Lahu tribe is also found in the Haut-Laos territory of French-Indo -Chine as well as in northern Siam. While there are some Lahus living West of the Salween river, most of the Lahus in Burma live in Kengtung State, between the Salween and Mekong rivers. The Kaws are more numerous in Kengtung State than in China, though quite a large number of the Kaws continue to live in Yunnan. Kaws are also to be found in Haut Laos country, and a sprinkling of them is seen to be living in northern Siam. Of the Kachins there are comparatively few in Kengtung State. Their real Burma home is in Bhamo and Myitkyina districts.

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There are several sub-divisions among these hill-tribes and each tribe has its own dialect. The linguistic differences however are not usually sufficiently pronounced to prevent conversation between the related though different racial units.

The Lahus, for instance, are divided into two main tribes called the Lahu Na and the Lahu Shi. According to Government classification, the Lahu Shi are designated as "Kwi". The Lahu Na however and the Lahu Shi are from the same parent stock and though there are decided differences in their respective dialects each can easily understand the other. The word "Na" means black and the word "Shi" means yellow and therefore some of us have thought that Black Lahu and Yellow Lahu would be a fitting classification for the respective tribes. It should however be said that neither tribe would be likely to accept such a simple classification. Nevertheless it seems to me to be a fitting designation; for though the Lahu Shi or Kwi, have as black hair and black eyes as the Lahu Na, the complexion of the Lahu Shi is of a yellowish turn, whereas the Lahu Na have more swarthy skins.

Each of the two main Lahu tribes has several racial sub-divisions. The Lahu Na tribes include the Na Pehn, Huli

Kulough, La Law, Veya, Laba, Hpu and Kaleh. The Lahu Shi include the Balang, Banceu, Namkyo and Meukeu.

Of the Kaw race, there are nine racial sub-divisions viz:- Lehleubo, JeuG'we, Jeu jaw, Jo Byawn, Leh Nyi, Che Mui, Hpyo Hso, Zeu Zi and Hteu La. In some similar way the Kachin race is divided into five parent tribes.

The problem of Kengtung State is not the density but rather the sparsity of population. Though its area is nearly twice that of North and South Wales, the total population of all races is only about 300,000. In certain parts of the State it is possible to travel all day and seldom meet anyone on the road. The sparsity of population is at least suited to the type of Taungya cultivation carried on by the hill tribes who carry on their agricultural operations by the most primitive methods. It would be impossible for those hill cultivators to survive under present conditions, if the population of Kengtung State were greatly to increase.

### 3. The History of Kengtung State.

Kengtung means the District of Tung Ka, "Keng" meaning district. The word Tungka goes back to legendary history. The story is that a Chinese Emperor had a large family of sons whom he desired to be administrators and war lords. Three or four of the sons refused to study the

science of warfare but desired rather to study religion. This greatly enraged the emperor, and he expressed his displeasure by committing his sons to prison. By supernatural powers all of the sons escaped and became hermits. One of the sons named Tungka wandered all the long way to Kengtung and while residing there, by chance he found sacred writings in the Cham Sak section of the town when he forced his steel staff into the ground. He afterwards prophesied that Kengtung would become a great and prosperous country. In Tungka's time the Kengtung plain was a great lake, about twenty miles in length and seven miles in width. At the present time the Nam Kun river flows through the Kengtung plain, and leaves the valley at a point twelve miles from Kengtung town and enters a narrow gorge. The Kengtung lake had no outlet and Tungka took the matter in hand. He dug a hole at the spot where the Nam Kun river leaves the plain, and placed in the hole a large crab, and as a result of the laborious efforts of the industrious animal the wall embankment that had held back the waters of the lake was broken down with the result the lake emptied itself through the crab-made narrow ravine and thus Tungka converted the lake into one of the most fertile of valleys for the cultivation of rice.

The story goes on to relate that Tungka wrote to his father the emperor inviting him to come and settle in the new land which he had discovered. The emperor responded by sending large companies of men, but they could not settle because of frequent sickness. After repeated attempts the Chinese concluded it was impossible for them to adapt themselves to the unfavourable climatic conditions of the Kengtung valley.

In connection with this legend, it is interesting to note that the official name of Kengtung is still Tungka Puri. The name Tungka Puri, is found on all official documents issued by the Sawbwa's Court in Kengtung.

Authentic history tells us that the Wa were the occupants of the Kengtung plain until the date when Kengtung was invaded by forces from Siam. According to records in the possession of the present Sawbwa of Kengtung, the above mentioned invasion from Siam occurred in the year 1243 A.D. A list of the names of the rulers or kings of Siam does not seem to have been kept until as late a date as 1550 A.D. Nor do the Kengtung records reveal the name of the king from Siam who first invaded the Kengtung country. It is related that there was a king in Siam who was very fond of hunting and on one occasion, during an extensive trip, he entered Kengtung State where his expedition was crowned with success. Within a few miles of Kengtung town he shot



a deer, in the district of Mung Lap or "mince - meat", the name being given, it is said, because there the king's venison was made into mince meat. So delighted was the king with Kengtung and so keen to acquire it as an addition to his kingdom, that on his return to Siam he sent an invading army into Kengtung, to which the Wa capitulated in the year 1243 A.D. The present Sawbwa of Kengtung State, it is said, is the Thirty-Ninth Prince of the Hkun rulers. The ruling class of Kengtung are the Hkuns and the official language of the Sawbwa's Court is Hkun and not the Western Shan language which is the spoken and written language of all the Shan people throughout Kengtung State. The Hkun script is very similar to the Siamese.

After the expulsion of the Wa tribe, Kengtung State was inhabited by Hkuns and Shans and for long periods the country appears to have been free from internal warfare as well as from invasion. To the South of the State, Burma was waging war with Siam and wars were frequent to the North of Kengtung State in Yunnan, where Burmans fought desperately against the Chinese. Surrounded by warring peoples, Kengtung doubtless did not wholly escape. During the years 1852-1854 the Siamese invaded Kengtung. In 1885 the Sawbwa of Kengtung rose in rebellion against Thibaw, King of Burma. In alliance with other Sawbwas of the Shan States, the allied

Shan armies "crossed the Salween in February 1886 and attacked Mong Nai".\* Within the same year the Kingdom of Burma was annexed to the British Empire, and complications arose which made it necessary for the British Government to establish her authority in the Shan States, with the result that in 1890 the isolated State of Kengtung came under British rule as a feudatory State. . The following quotation from the Upper Burma Gazetteer explains how this came about:- "It had been first intended that the Anglo-Siamese Commission should visit Kengtung. This was found impracticable and the Superintendent of the Shan States was therefore detached from the commission to visit it. With a party of about twenty sepoy under Capt.F.J.Pink,D.S.O he reached there in March 1890. Negotiations were somewhat complicated by the murder of one mule-driver and the wounding of another by the Sawbwa almost immediately after their arrival; but the Chief paid satisfactory compensation and fully accepted the position of a feudatory. It was decided by the Government of India that Kengtung should be treated as a State in subordinate alliance with the British Government, preserving its independence as regards its domestic administration but agreeing to regulate its external policy in accordance with the advice of the Superintendent of the Shan States. A sanad was granted to the

\* Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States. p.292

Sawbwa by which he was recognised as Chief of the State by the British Government on these conditions. The State of Kengtung is by far the most influential of the Trans-Salween States. - - - . Its complete submission was therefore a matter of some importance and practically guaranteed the peace of the Shan States."\*

Little is known as to the actual time when Kengtung first received Lahu and Kaw immigrants from China. Centuries ago there was a large Lahu community between Mung Lem and Meng Meng in Yunnan Province, and their Lahu country was invaded by a Burmese army while later the Lahus were unsuccessfully attacked by Shan forces in which encounter the then Sawbwa of Kengtung played a prominent part. In more recent times, in the year 1887, the Chinese fought with the Lahus when the latter had the Wa as their ally. The Chinese found the Lahu to be a tough fighter and not until the Chinese procured modern means of warfare were they able to conquer the Lahu. The largest portion of the Lahu race continues to remain in Yunnan, as subjects of China, while that part of the tribe that has settled all over Kengtung State is incorporated into the British Empire. The Lahus have been in Kengtung for over a century at least. An old Lahu resident of Kengtung told me that he was born in Kengtung State and he was seventy years old. I gained the impression, however,

\* Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States, Vol. I.

Part I. page 307.

that his father's family was among the early Lahu settlers in Kengtung State.

Most of the Lahus in Kengtung came from Meng Meng and Mung Lem districts in Yunnan. The direction of the Lahu migration has been from the North to the South. Prince Henri d'Orleans found Lahus at Mien Ning and the people living there told him that the Lahu and the Lolo came from near Nan King in China and settled in the ~~two~~-hundred miles stretch of country between Meng Meng and Mung Lem.\*

The Kaws also migrated from China into Kengtung. Nothing is known about their original home except that it was somewhere in China. In their migration southward into Kengtung, it seems probable that many of them entered Kengtung at the extreme East of the State and near to the Mekong gorge; for in the Eastern districts of the State and also in the region beyond that Mekong river in Haut Laos country, the Kaws are quite numerous.

The Kachins living in Kengtung came from Hsenwi and not directly from China. The original home of the Kachins however, is believed by them to be at the headwaters of the Irrawaddy River. At the present time all the races of Kengtung State live peaceably under the jurisdiction of the Sawbwa, who in turn is responsible to the British Government.

\* Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States, pp. 585,6,  
Part I Vol. I.

#### 4. Kengtung's Relationship with Other States and Peoples.

Kengtung is in constant relationship with four more or less great nations; Great Britain, French-Indo-China, and Siam. As an integral part of the Federated Shan States, it forms a part of the British Empire. By Post and Telegraph and by improved communications, Kengtung is gradually losing its isolation and is more and more becoming identified with Burma proper. The old caravan trade route between Kengtung, Hsipaw and Mandalay is likely to carry more commerce in the future than at any past time. There is therefore no question about Kengtung's definite relations with Burma and with the British Empire.

Again, Kengtung is always reaching out to Yunnan in China and Yunnan is continually influencing Kengtung. The trade routes between distant cities of Yunnan and Kengtung are busy with traders during the "dry" season, December to the end of April. Thousands of Chinese pack mules come into Kengtung laden with richly embroidered silks, cotton goods, iron, salt, walnuts, figs and other products. Many of those articles are sold in the Kengtung bazaar, while other caravans barter their wares in remote villages of the State in exchange for raw cotton. The roads of Kengtung State are

made by Chinese and Was who come hundreds strong to work on the roads for periods of two and three months. Some Chinese permanently settle in the State and marry Shan women, so that in Kengtung town there is quite a Chinese community which is sufficiently large to support two religious temples, one a Mohammedan mosque and the other a Confucian temple. Shan traders from Kengtung penetrate Yunnan, taking with them cheap but attractive goods of occidental manufacture. Through the avenues of trade the Chinese influence in Kengtung is very great.

Perhaps the treacherous and lonely Mekong river is a natural barrier to the conduct of brisk trade between French-Indo-Chine and Kengtung State, especially during the rainy season; but when the rains are over and the river flows more normally and peacefully, the inveterate Shan trader, by means of mule and bullock caravan, pushes his trade into the Haut Laos country. On that lonely boundary opium in raw form passes from one State to the other and some years it is a very lucrative business.

The fourth country with which Kengtung has very definite relationship is Siam and since a motor road has been recently opened between the two countries, Siamese influence in Kengtung in the immediate future will be increasingly strong. Trade will be diverted from Burma and will pass into Siam. Raw products of Kengtung State

and Yunnan will reach the more accessible Siamese markets.

The unexplored and undeveloped State of Kengtung is now ready for exploration and development. The State has great possibilities for expansion, since, as we have noted, the country has contacts with these four nations. The construction of good roads throughout Kengtung State will make those contacts closer. On almost any big bazaar day in Kengtung town, may be seen Chinese, Siamese, Burmese, Shan, Lahu, Kaw, Kachin, Lisu, Wa, Indian and Tailoi peoples. The Shan language, supplemented by many suggestive signs and gestures, is the medium through which those traders, representing various racial groups and languages, do their business. Here in the market place, many different races come, temporarily at least, under the powerful linguistic influence of the predominant Shan people.

##### 5. Social Aspects of The Races.

The family and not the individual is the social unit. In fact it might be still more accurate to say, the village community and not the individual is the social unit.. This is especially true among the Lahus and the Kaws, with regard to both business and religion. While the individual does have a large measure of freedom to express his own personality, his activities are

considerably controlled by the village chief and his council. No individual member would dare sell a basket of paddy (unhusked rice) below or above the price fixed by the Headman of the community. In the sphere of religion it is the village and not the individual that worships. Religion, to those hill tribes, is entirely a community affair, as for instance, a Lahu, as an individual, seldom if ever becomes a Christian, but many Lahus as communities and social units have become very remarkable christian villages. If the chief and elders of a village decide to adopt Christianity, the individual members of the community usually acquiesce with the decision of their headman. The younger element in the village follows the elders and the individual has little or no voice in the matter. If any member of the group should oppose the decision of his chief and refuse to become a member of the newly formed Christian group, he would be compelled to leave the village. It is characteristic of most Lahu communities throughout Kengtung State that they are either wholly animistic in religious belief and practice or wholly Christian.

Again, a Lahu young man when he gets married does not immediately build his own house and live in it with his wife, but he goes to live in the house of his bride's parents and is subject to them for a contracted



period of time. During this period of servitude, the newly married man has little will of his own; for his will must be to do the will of his father-in-law. In the case of the Kaws, the bride leaves her parents once and for all to become a member of her husband's family and though they live in a little hut-house apart but adjoining the house of the groom's parents, they are regarded as part of the household and family.

There is inculcated in the young folk a sincere respect for age and there is a common expression very familiar among the Lahus, namely, "Chawmaw yaw yan te u" which means "pay respect to the elders". This filial piety is expressed in various ways. On certain occasions young Lahu people may be seen going to the house of the oldest member of the village- this person who may be either man or woman- carrying jugs full of water with which they wash the hands of their respected elder.

All these races have as a common and outstanding characteristic an amazing capacity for friendliness. Some Kaw villages that may never have seen a white man would at first be shy and fearful but on better acquaintance would treat the white stranger with utmost kindness. These tribes are very hospitable and in almost all of their houses there is a room set aside for guests. They receive

in their homes men of other races, give them a place in which to sleep and a breakfast before they start the day's journey. When in common peril of famine and sickness they try to help each other as much as possible and some of them would share their last basket of rice with some starving and unfortunate family. The village as a unit stands or falls together. They have a saying to this effect:-  
 "Te leh tegh te, suh leh tegh suh" which means, " If we live, we live together, if we die, we die together".

#### 6. The Opportunity to Study Religion in Kengtung State.

Kengtung affords a unique opportunity for the study of religion because of the fact that there are present in Kengtung many different forms of religious faith, and because those religions, and especially Animism, have been preserved in their native purity. The geographical isolation of Kengtung State has prevented the infiltration of Western religious beliefs. Christian missions first entered the State about thirty years ago and previous to their entrance, the different races of the State had few if any contacts with Western ideas.

It has already been stated that the Shans and the Tailoi races are Buddhists. These two very religious peoples have given expression to their faith by their building many temples throughout the length and breadth of

the State. In Kengtung town alone there must be a score of Buddhist temples, the presence of which places of worship is indicative of the fact that Buddhism has very deeply entrenched itself in the emotions and in the thought of the Shan and Tailoi peoples. I do not think that the Shan are as intelligent Buddhists as the Burmans of Rangoon, and Mandalay, but the Shans are loyal to their Buddhist faith so far as they know it. It is with a deep spirit of reverence that they attend the temple services, and with a thorough sense of awe that they kneel before the silent Buddha. On holy days women and elderly men are most in evidence during the temple worship. The young men and women participate in the many religious festivals which are very happy social occasions.

The Indians of Kengtung, mostly merchants, have their Hindu and Mohammedan temples and the Chinese have their Mohammedan and Confucian temples. At Loimwe, which is seventeen miles from Kengtung town, a big religious festival is annually conducted by the Gurkha sepoy, who are the adherents to a branch of the Hindu religion. The ceremony takes place during the moon-days of Kuwar, i.e., the end of September and the opening days of October. This Divali festival for the majority of Hindus marks the opening of the New Year on which occasion sacrifices are

made to the blood-loving goddess Kali, who is regarded as being warrior goddess and the mighty slayer and conqueror of giant demons that troubled the earth. A writer quoting from the "Kalika Purana" says, "The flesh of the antelope and the rhinoceros give my beloved Kali delight for five hundred years. By a human sacrifice attended by the forms laid down, she is pleased for a thousand years; and by the sacrifice of three men, a hundred thousand years. - - - An oblation of blood, which has been rendered pure by holy texts is equal to ambrosia."\*

During the Divali festival which I have witnessed on two occasions at Loimwe, many goats, ducks and doves and one buffalo are sacrificed. The sacrificial fowls and animals are rendered pure by the reading of sacred writings and by the sprinkling of ashes. Especial care is taken to sanctify the buffalo and when it is offered, it is regarded as an especially good omen, if the slayer is able to sever the animal's head from its trembling body, with one swift and powerful stroke of a specially sharpened sword.

With regard to the hill tribes, who are Animists, neither the Kaws nor the Kachins have temples; for the animist does not seem to require a temple in which to give expression to his religious belief. However, the Lahus do have temples which are used not in relation to their

animistic beliefs and practices, but for the worship of their "Supreme Being", G'uisha. The Lahus call their hut-temple, "Bon Yeh". "Bon" means "blessing" and "Yeh" means "House". Therefore, they regard their temple as the House of Blessing. There are no idols in a Lahu temple and their religious traditions forbid the worship of idols. Their belief in a supreme being, is apparently as old as the race itself and they most certainly had such a faith, long before they came in contact with any white man. Concerning their beliefs in a supreme being, "G'uisha", and the relationship of this form of faith to their animistic beliefs and practices, we shall have something to say at a later stage. The animistic Kachins also have their supreme being. Their name for God is "Karai Kasang" and it should be said that the Kachins had their idea of "Karai Kasang", long before any missionary or Western influence came in contact with the Kachin people.

With regard to the Kaws who are perhaps the most superstitious of Kengtung's animistic races, it should be noted that their idea of a supreme being is rather vague. Though some of them do think of their "Ahpimiyeh" as the creator of the world they know, the majority of the Kaws regard "Ahpimiyeh" as their deified ancestors.

Then too, during the last thirty years there has grown up in Kengtung State a considerable christian community, who are converts from Buddhism and Animism. This multiplicity of varied religious faiths throughout the State, presents the student of religion with a unique opportunity to observe his fellow men in their serious quest for God and goodness.

#### 7. The Writer's Experience and Preparation.

It has been my privilege to live for thirteen years in Kengtung State, Burma, during which time I have made many friends with peoples of different tribes. As a missionary, I was interested in the different forms of religious faith which I found among the Buddhistic Shans and the animistic Lahu, Kaw and Kachin races and it has always been my endeavour to approach those ancient and religious faiths with a sympathetic and unbiased mind so as to discover whatever was good and praiseworthy. During my years among those peoples I gained a knowledge of the Lahu language and with this language facility, it was possible to enter into Lahu homes and villages and converse with them. Through many and various contacts with Lahu religious leaders, both non-christian and christian, I gained a fairly extensive knowledge of their traditions, religious beliefs and customs. My journeys took me all over Kengtung State and beyond the British borders, to far distant Meng Meng in

in Yunnan, China; to Mung Hsing in French-Indo-Chine and from Bangkok, the centre of Siamese Buddhism. I travelled through Siam to the northern cities of Chieng Mai and Chieng Rai, which are Shan towns of Siam and great centres of Buddhism. It has been my privilege to visit Kaw and Lahu villages where few, if any, white men have reached. During those extensive and arduous tours, I collected much data concerning animistic beliefs and practices. I have also been very helpfully instructed concerning animism by educated Lahu and Karen christian teachers, who have lived for years in intimate contact with these races. To those teachers I am very deeply indebted, not alone for the knowledge they have imparted to me concerning the animistic peoples of Kengtung but also for their helpful companionship during extensive and fatiguing journeys throughout lonely jungles.

Concerning Animism in Kengtung State, Burma, which is the scope of this thesis, there are no written sources. Several books have been written about the Kachins, one of which, "The Kachins, Religion and Mythology" by C. Gilhodes, I have found very helpful. However, most of the material of this thesis is new data, collected by my teachers and myself over a period of years.

### 8. Animism and Its Relationship to the Necessities of Life.

The struggle to wrest from the soil the required amount of rice to support the family has been a strong factor in keeping primitive man religious.

In Kengtung State the soil is quite fertile; but the implements of agriculture are very poor and of a primitive nature. The courageous hill farmers of Kengtung are seriously handicapped both in their knowledge of farming and by their lack of improved equipment. The amount of labour involved in cutting down, with a small axe, a virgin mountain forest is a tremendous strain on the physical resources of those highland cultivators. Frequently families are faced with hunger because of prevailing epidemics and famine. These jungle folk have many fearful things with which to contend. The forces of nature, rain, and sometimes the lack of it, wind and storm, thunder and lightning - these forces which they think are animated by evil spirits - fill their hearts and minds with a sense of fearful wonder and awe, which compels them to cry out for protection.

There is the basal need for protection of their crops from the ravages of insects, wild animals, rats and rot, so that they may have the good fortune to harvest enough rice for the support of the hungry household.



to have their lives secured against thieves, bandits, tigers and leopards.

Sickness and disease take a heavy toll of life; and their belief that almost all illness is caused by evil spirits, is an added burden and source of worry. The sickness which undermines the vitality of most of them is malaria, and perhaps this disease is the chief cause of the continual state of poverty of the peoples of Kengtung State. Weakened physical vitality is often carelessly and thoughtlessly labelled as laziness; but the malarial stricken peoples, no matter how great the urge to work, are physically unable to put sufficient time and labour on their cultivated fields to secure a full paddy bin at harvest time. In their struggle for food and for the survival their necks are constantly under the yoke. Little wonder that many of them seek relief from their daily grind in simple amusements and play, while others spend their time in gambling. The Shans like the Chinese are inveterate gamblers and even their religious festivals are occasions for consecutive days of gambling.

This thesis will attempt to show how animism is

related to, functions in, and pervades the individual and social life of the animistic peoples of Kengtung State, Burma.

With regard to a definition of Animism, I conceive Animism to be a belief in spirits which exist in and pervade all nature and also a belief in the existence of individual souls - souls which occupy, and depart from the body during life and which survive the body at the time of death. To the animistic mind the objective world is pervaded with spiritual beings most of which (to the mind of primitive man) are of a malicious disposition and require to be placated. We shall see, however, that some of those powerful spirits are guardian and protective spirits and therefore regarded as good spirits to which few if any offerings are required.

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## II

Animism Functioning in The Life of These Races.1. Birth and Naming.

In the case of the Lahus just before the birth of a child there seems to be no prohibition as to what the mother should eat. She eats her normal diet but in addition, during the period of pregnancy, she eats large quantities of fine clay. However, pregnant women are not the only geophagists of Kengtung State; for men, too, are earth eaters. After the birth of the child the mother is not allowed to eat any kind of food which she has not been accustomed to eat. What she ate after the birth of the first child, provided it agreed with her, she may eat ever after. During the period of the mother's convalescence, she eats alone, no one being allowed to eat with her. The husband may eat anything he wishes.

The child is born in the house. The mother assists herself in labour by holding on to a rope suspended from a beam of the house and while she is in a kneeling posture her husband assists her by lifting her body by the arm-pits while at the same time a crude but sympathetically disposed mid-wife presses the abdomen. If the child is slow in coming guns are fired; because if the guns are not fired the

the child will not be disposed to be born. After the gun firing, if the labour is still protracted, they take the sheath of a sword or an old cloth bag and into either one or the other water is poured and caught. This water is given to the labouring mother to drink.

After the birth of the child, the umbilical cord is placed on top of a piece of charcoal and cut by a sharp edge of bamboo bark. The cord and placenta are immediately taken from the house and buried in the ground. The newly born infant is wrapped in a blanket by the husband or midwife and placed in a basket.

If twin children are born, they are not killed by the Lahus, though they become the occasion for great fear and their unwelcome arrival makes it necessary to offer sacrifices to the spirits. The spirits are requested to prevent the birth of twins in all the future history of the village. I personally know of one Lahu Shi village in which twins were born. The event completely disturbed the normal life of the community and so fearful and distressed were those villagers that they all temporarily deserted the village and lived in huts in the jungle until the spell of fear abated.

Should the first born child die, the second one to be born gets the name of the first born child and should the second-born child die in infancy, the third-born child is

given the name of the first-born child. If all the children born to those parents should die in infancy they may take an orphan child and rear it.

To the Lahus a cycle of life is twelve days. On the completion of the child's first cycle of life, it receives its name. The baby may be given one of several names. If a male child it may receive the name of the grand-father or father and an infant of either sex may receive the name of an animal or a name corresponding to the time of day it was born. The prefix "Ca" signifies the person is a male, and the female name prefix is "Na". Thus Ca G'a means Mr.Chicken and NaVa means Miss Pig. Ca Ha means Mr.Evening and Na Hpeu means Miss Night, while the last-born child in the family is sometimes called Ca Leh which means Mr.Last.

It is sometimes feared that a child has not been properly or fittingly named. This is usually held to be the case with regard to infants who continue to be ill and weak after the naming ceremony. A baby may have been named Ca La which means Mr.Tiger. Such a name is perfectly proper for any healthy Lahu child but for a sickly Ca La it may be all wrong. When the parents think and feel so, they call in the village priest to perform a second naming ceremony. If sickly Ca La was born in the evening time by process of divination, the priest determines that it would be fitting to change the name

to Ca Ha, which means Mr. Evening. This is promptly done with the hope that the child after having received its new and more suitable name, will grow healthy and strong.

At the time of the naming ceremony, the priest or some elder of the village ties cotton cords around the wrists of the child the significance of which act is to keep the soul in the child's body. When the cords have been tied the priest or elder pronounces a blessing on the child in words like these:-

" Be healthy and prosperous. May you grow rich and may you never meet affliction and may you grow strong and mighty."

With regard to the Kaws no one is allowed to speak concerning physically imperfect children or concerning ill-formed animals in the presence of an expectant Kaw mother. Her fear of death in child bearing and all the fearful consequences involved, lead Kaw mothers to think that the business of child bearing is not a big blessing. At the gateway of every Kaw village are two large images made of wood, representing male and female figures. The male image is named "Bvuh Je" and the female figure is called "Hkaw De". In the event of difficulty in child birth, it is the custom of the Kaws to pour water over the Bvuh Je and the Hkaw De and great care is taken to catch some of the water, which is given to the woman in labour to facilitate the birth of the child. We shall have more to say concerning the gateways of Kaw villages later,

suffice it to say for the present, the Kaws apparently ascribe supernatural powers to the Bvuh Je and the Hkaw De.

Medicine is sometimes given to Kaw women in severe labour and the magic ceremony of water blowing is resorted to in order to secure a happy issue. It is the custom of some Kaws to have an elder of the village take the placenta and bury it immediately in the ground; while it is the practice of others to put the placenta in a small basket and hang it outside the house and at intervals to pour hot water over it.

Kaw children are born in little houses adjoining the main house and old women and the husband are usually present when the child is born. The reason for the precaution taken in not having the birth take place in the main house is largely an economical one; for if twin children were to be born in the main house, it would mean that the house and property of the parents unfortunate enough to have twins, would have to be partly or wholly confiscated. One of the worst calamities that could befall a Kaw family and Kaw village is the birth of twin children. If twins are born, as sometimes happens, they are immediately killed. Twins are 'chaw lu' i.e., children of destruction. The villagers seem to regard the unfortunate parents, temporarily at least, as polluted persons, for the father and mother of the twins are compelled to leave the village at once and as they make their exit, the young men and women especially must not turn a curious eye on the banished

couple. If they should do so a like misfortune would probably befall them at some future time. The fear stricken parents are compelled to pass through a period of suffering and testing. What mental and heart anguish they experience it would be difficult to say. They suffer a temporal loss, for they cannot wholly avoid the confiscation of part of their belongings. The clothes which they wore and some of the household utensils are destroyed. Out of their poverty they have to pay the cost of the propitiatory sacrifices to appease the offended spirits, and when they return from their three days and three nights of banishment in the jungle where their only dress were the leaves of the jungle, they have to start life anew.

The twins and the village Seer accompany the parents to the jungle and there at a selected spot a big and heavy trunk of a banana tree is prepared and in trap-like fashion it is allowed to fall on the twin children to crush them to death. The twins have previously been almost suffocated to death, their mouths and nostrils having been filled with a mixture of ash and rice bran. The banana trunk is split in two and serves as a coffin for the tiny corpses.

During the three days of isolation and purification in the jungle the Kaw Seer makes numerous sacrifices to the evil spirits - and these spirits are regarded by the Kaws as being very fearful and extremely malicious - of pigs, fowls and dogs. When the three days of banishment and sacrifice



have been completed the parents are allowed to return to the village. They are reaccepted into the social life of the community and they are no longer regarded as Tabu. However, the entire village is strictly prohibited from visiting other villages for the period of a month, and during the same period members of those other communities refrain from visiting the afflicted village.

Not only do the Kaws kill their twins but they kill what they regard as abnormally formed children, as for instance, a child born with a double thumb or with six toes. The Kaws have not the least sense of guilt when they destroy either their twins or their ill-formed children. They are under a compulsion to get rid of the accursed things, so that peace and prosperity may be restored to the village.

Among the Kaws when normal children are born, it is their custom to kill two fowls, one for the naming-ceremony and one which is kept for a period of twelve days to be fed at intervals to the mother and the child. The new born child receives its name on the day of its birth and it is always given part of the father's name. A cock is killed and, after being cooked a tiny bit, is fed to the child, and part of the fowl is offered to the spirits. When a child is born whether it is a physically healthy or weak baby, either in sickness or in health, its soul is called and requested to enter the infant's body and at this time cords are tied

around the wrists of the child to keep the soul in the body. The grand-parents or parents name the child. Visitors of the happy household bring cooked eggs and rice and lumps of salt as gifts and pronounce their blessings on the baby. Presents of silver and copper coins are fixed as ornaments and charms on the baby's hat and around the neck of the child is tied a tiger's tooth, which is regarded as a very powerful charm. Evil spirits are said to be very much afraid of the teeth of a tiger. The same ceremony is conducted for both male and female children.

With one exception the Kaws do not give the names of animals nor do they call their children by the time of day in which they are born. The exception is the case of the family in which twins have been born. All the children of a particular family born previous to the arrival of the twins received part of the father's name; but all children born in that family after the arrival of the twins are given animal names. I know of a Kaw family in the Eastern part of Kengtung State, which is a very good example of the above mentioned naming custom. The name of the Kaw man is G'we Sheh. In this man's family were born eleven children and they received the following names:-

1. Sheh Chu
2. Sheh Chun
3. Sheh Bo
4. Sheh Htui
5. Sheh Yu
6. Sheh Daw
7. Sheh Deu

8. Twins -no name- Killed according to Kaw custom.
- 9.
10. Lawn Hpun - Name of Animal and Day.
11. Ho Lawn - Name of Animal and Day.

It will be readily observed from the above that the first seven children of G'we Sheh's family received part of his name, "Sheh"; the eighth and ninth children born as twins received no name and the tenth and eleventh born respectively received the names of animals.

The Kaws have the same custom as the Lahus of changing the name of a child should it continue in sickness. A weakly body is a strong indication that the child is not satisfied with its name. One leg of the sacrificial cock which was killed when the child was born, is provisionally kept in case a change of name proves necessary. If it is decided by the Seer to give a new name to the child, the preserved leg of the fowl is cooked and the new name is given. If that part of the cock had not been kept, it is absolutely necessary to sacrifice another fowl, before the child's name can be changed.

There is a saying among the Kaws that when a new born infant cries it is asking for three things;- Its soul, a blessing and food.

Animistic beliefs function at the time of birth of Kachin children. The child is born in the house. During the period of labour the expectant Kachin mother is given hot water to drink in which has been dipped either the dried head of an eel or the dried umbilical cord of a child. C.Gilhodes

says, "If the delivery is difficult, they first invoke the domestic nats and order a dumsa, to sacrifice to them whatever they desire; the patient, on her side, beseeches Karai Kasang (God) to catch at once the vital nerves of the child. If in spite of that, delivery remains painful, the dumsa declares to which evil spirit sacrifice is to be made and they offer whatever is asked. If a good result is not yet obtained, they then accuse the Sauns (shades of women who died in child-bed) of wishing to make the mother die, and drive them off in proper style. They ransack all the corners of the house, brandish swords and knives, make all sorts of noise ----- yell, shoot off guns, throw arrows, slash with swords, and keep up that uproar along the principal road leading to the forest up to the nearest torrent, where they believe the Sauns run away." \*

When a child is born the happy event is made known to all the village by sending from the house in which the child has been born, to every house in the community, small pieces of cooked egg. Presently the entire population turns out to visit the new born baby and none goes empty handed, for all visitors take with them eggs and bundles of firewood and thus express their neighbourly friendliness to the mother and child.

The name is given to the child immediately, for if an

\*C Gilhodes The Kachins Religion and Mythology. p.176.

evil spirit were first to name the child that would not be good. As in the case of the Lahus and Kaws, cords are tied around the wrists of the child at the naming ceremony. On the second or third day the child is presented to the House spirits whose protection is sought for the child, at which time the Seer offers to the spirits. On the fourth day after the birth of the child the Kachin mother goes to the stream to bathe herself and to wash her clothing. This is of a nature of ceremonial purification. Swords and knives are stuck into the ground near the bathing place to keep away the evil spirits.

Among the Kachins "premature birth is always attributed to the ill-will of wicked spirits called 'mbia; these latter to increase their number, bite and make the foetus die which, in its turn becomes a little 'mbia". \*

Mrs. Milne in her very fascinating book, "Shans at Home," reveals an excellent understanding as to the way in which Animism functions in the beliefs and customs of the Shan people with reference to the birth of children. She says, "A Shan baby is rich in having two fathers and two mothers. Besides his human parents he has a spirit father - "Paw Hpan" - and mother - "Meh Hpan" who keep watch and guard over him. They act as sentinels to see that bad spirits do not come near their child."\*

The Shans though they have a much higher type of

\* C. Gilhodes The Kachins p.180.

\* Mrs. Milne, Shans at Home p.34

civilization than the Lahus, Kaws and Kachins, and even though they are Buddhists, are just as animistic in their practices as are these other races. My wife was the attendant nurse when a baby was born in the royal family of the Sawbwa of Kengtung. Though the patient had a perfectly normal delivery, except for a period of protracted labour which caused some anxious worry to the family, at which time the old Shan custom of magical water-blowing was resorted to, in order to facilitate the birth of the child.

The umbilical cord is cut with a sharpened bamboo and the placenta is carefully buried in the ground. Cords are tied around the wrists of the baby when it receives its name and on its cap is attached a very large needle. It is conspicuously placed on the front of the cap; for "this fills all bad spirits with fear and keeps them at a distance." \* The Shans, too, have the custom of changing the name of the child if it continues in a sickly condition. Mrs. Milne remarks, "his name may be changed more than once, to puzzle the evil spirits that are tormenting him." The fond parents resort to the practice of deceiving those evil spirits. This is accomplished, as Mrs. Milne points out, in three different ways. If the sickly child is a boy the parents dress him in girl's clothing and name him "Little Daughter." Should this attempt to deceive the evil spirits fail and the health of the boy does not improve, the mother takes the child to the jungle and hides him under a bush and returns

\* Shans at Home p.p.33.37.

home. She informs a woman that has followed her where the child is and while this woman friend stands guard over the infant, the mother, upon reaching home, begins to deceptively wail aloud and bemoans the loss of her baby. Towards evening the woman friend returns with the child but the mother pretends not to know her baby and calls it an ugly infant. At last she buys the child from the woman and the mother receives and names it 'Little Rupee' or 'Little Found in the Jungle'." "The soul of a child", Mrs. Milne writes, "is believed to enter into the mother from twenty to thirty days after conception. It is brought to earth by an attendant spirit. It alights on fruit or vegetable food but not on meat when the woman is eating and is swallowed by her." \*

The mystifying experience of birth is surrounded with and is attended by much fear which leads the animist to invent all kinds of superstitious practices by means of which customs he hopes to surmount and conquer his difficulties. From the cradle to the grave his mind is beset with fear.

\* Mrs. Milne, "Shans at Home" p.181.

## 2. Eating and Drinking.

It is the custom of the Lahus to eat three times daily and there are very few if any prohibitions with regard to what a Lahu must eat or drink. He eats the flesh of almost any kind of animal from a tiger to a monkey but, unlike his Kaw neighbour, he does not eat domestic dog flesh; for his traditions teach him that the infancy of his race was suckled by a dog. However, the Lahu has no objection to sell live dog flesh when the Kaws come to his village to purchase dog meat. The Lahus do try to prohibit the drinking of liquor and the smoking of opium. The latter when consumed in large quantities they know is harmful but as regards whisky consumption many of them entertain doubts as to its harmful effects, in fact some of them say, "Zuh dawve koleh Ne ma Che" which means, "If we drink liquor, the evil spirits do not bite." However, the writer knew one non-christian village where it was positively forbidden to bring whisky into the village and any member of that community who wished to take intoxicating drink had to build his house outside the boundaries of the village and was compelled to live there with his family.

I have already intimated that the Lahus believe in a Supreme Being, the creator of the world, "G'uisha." It is the custom of some animistic Lahus to make daily offerings to "G'uisha" of incense, water and a little cooked rice. This offering is made just before eating. It is also a



custom of the Lahus to make an offering to "G'uisha" of the first fruits of the harvest and it is a belief among them that if they should fail to make this offering, their food would stick in their throats and their rice bins, no matter how full, would be speedily consumed. The harvest festival, which is called "Suh Cave," is a time for feasting for the whole village. At harvest time Lahu greets Lahu on the road by asking the question, "Suh ca peu la," which means "have you eaten the new rice?"

Again, an entire Lahu village partakes in a common meal when a sick household does "Bon teve" which literally translated means, "Blessing Do," "Bon" being the word for blessing and "Te" means to do. In a later chapter of this thesis entitled, "Sacrificing and Offering," we will there go into the discussion of "Bon Teve"; suffice it to say for the present that when the Lahus "Bon Teve" a pig is killed and cooked. However, before the villagers partake of the common meal, a small portion of the flesh is offered to the spirits; indeed, it is the general practice of animistic Lahus, when they eat food which has been prepared for either offering or sacrifice to the spirits, first of all to offer small portions of the gifts, before they themselves eat. Sometimes it is a cooked egg, a little boiled rice or a little whisky of which the offerings consist, while at other times the offerings are fowls and pigs. The spirits are requested to eat and after

waiting for a few moments, the offerers eat whatever food is left. The New Year's celebration, marriage and burial ceremonies are also great occasions of feasting for village groups.

The Kaws, though they are exceedingly superstitious animists, under normal circumstances eat almost any kind of food; under other conditions, strict prohibitions prevent them from eating certain foods. Dog flesh is a favourite dish of the Kaws and it constitutes part of their daily diet. Among the Kaws the dog is a common animal of sacrifice and they believe that the jaw bone of a dog is a powerful charm to keep evil spirits from entering the village.

Feet of deer and mountain goat are eaten by the Kaws because those animals have great strength. Flesh of deer and wild goat must be abandoned in the jungle, if those animals when wounded call out and moan before dying. Neither the hunter nor any member of the village to which the hunter belongs is allowed to eat the flesh of moaning wild game.

At rice planting time Kaw villagers partake of a common meal but before eating, a little of the rice and curry is offered to the water spirit. On this occasion a fowl is the bird of sacrifice.

In connection with marriage the Kaws have some interesting customs with regard to diet. In cases of elopement when a young Kaw man runs off with his willing bride to his village, if upon their arrival there, they have time to

cook and eat an egg before the parents of the eloped girl arrive, (under this circumstance) the bride's parents must give their consent to the marriage. In cases of regular marriage, when parents of the bride conduct their young daughter to the village and home of the bridegroom, they take with them a pot of rice and a hog's head which is their contribution to the marriage feast. Those who do not take a hog 's head, take a rupee and with that buy rice and rum for the village elders who assist in the marriage ceremony. Before the community consumes the marriage feast, the elders take a little of the food and offer it to guardian spirits in the house of the groom. After the elders have partly eaten, they pronounce a blessing on the bride and groom.

Pregnant Kaw women must not eat black squirrel, wild goat, bear, black monkey and eel. Pig, dog, fowl and the flesh of imperfect animals are also prohibited. A wife who has not given birth to any children is sometimes advised either by her husband or by responsible village elders, to go and sleep with some young bachelor. If the woman becomes pregnant and gives birth to a child, the husband has to kill a pig and feast the elders and the potent bachelor must be presented with gifts.

If a widowed Kaw mother should decide to take a new husband she must turn over all the children of her first marriage to the parents or brothers of her deceased husband.

On this occasion a meal of separation is eaten. Rice and curry is prepared and the mother and children sit opposite each other and eat together for the last time.

In time of sickness rice and curry is cooked and fed to the Seer by friends of the sick person and the sacrificed pig is also eaten by the villagers, after a little of the flesh has been offered to the spirits. At time of death part of a fowl is offered to the dead, before the mourners partake of the food. A small portion of the rice and curry is carelessly flung beside the eating table. At the time of burial the fowl that is killed is eaten neither by the Seer nor the relatives of the deceased. It is eaten by non-relatives only. For the reason that roasted meat is the food eaten during the meal of separation between the living and the dead, it is prohibited as part of the usual daily diet of the Kaws.

When a domestic animal, cow, pig or goat, has been killed by a tiger or leopard, if the villagers want to eat the flesh of the tiger-killed animal, they must cut away portions of every part of the "Kill" and cut each of those portions into nine pieces and offer them to the spirit of the tiger. If they do so, they may happily feast upon the flesh of the tiger-killed pig or cow.

The New Year's celebrations of the Kaws last for four days, during which time rice-bread, fowls, tea and liquor

are eaten. Part of the food is offered to the spirits, for at the basis of the New Year's feast, is the animistic custom of their feeding the spirits of their ancestors. Once every year the Kaws repair to the village gateway, where reside the protective spirits of the village. On this occasion two days are spent on feasting the repairers of the gate.

It is the custom of the Kachins to make offering of the first-fruits of the harvest to the spirits. The villagers make it an occasion for feasting, under very definite and specific regulations. The feast usually takes place in the chief's house and for this feast the killing of domestic animals is prohibited. Only dried flesh, which might be a month or two old, may be eaten. However, the meat of wild game newly killed is not prohibited.

The Kachins make home-brewed beer and before drinking of it a small quantity is offered to the spirits. Extreme acidity of the beer is due to the influence of one of three malicious spirits. The Seer indicates which one of the three is responsible for the sourness of the brew and proceeds to make an offering to the offending spirit, after which offering the women commence the manufacture of a fresh mixture. \*

Feasts and festivals are numerous among the Kachin people. Their marriage and funeral ceremonies are characterised by much feasting. The sacrifice of large domestic buffaloes is quite frequent on those occasions and portions of those animals are first of all offered to the spirits before the

\* C. Gilhodes. The Kachins Rel. & Mythology p. 153.

villagers indulge in their feasting. There is no initiatory ceremony for Kachin youth, such as prevails among some races of other lands, but there is a Feast of Youth, which is an occasion when Kachin youth of both sexes go to some grove in the jungle and in the presence of their village elders, feast, drink and make merry. It is a time when the young people pay respect to the elders and also an occasion when the young men exchange gifts with their girl friends. "They go away so as to reach the village at nightfall; a good many feel heavy in the head, but all hearts are full of joy. Of course, a dumsa(Seer) sacrifices on the way a fowl to Chai Maraung that a good night may follow such a beautiful day." \*

In connection with the Kachin burial ceremony there is made an exclusive offering to the dead. This offering to the dead consists of a little chicken, of which no member of the village is allowed to eat.

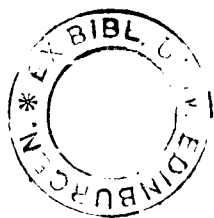
The Shan of Kengtung have many festivals occasions during which time it is the customary for them to kill cows and buffaloes. At the culmination of one of those feasts, I witnessed a very interesting early morning religious ceremony, which was conducted in the public square of the village. There were half a dozen yellow-robed Buddhist priests seated in a row on the ground and immediately opposite the priests was a line of elderly Shan men and women and between the two rows were numerous gifts which the kneeling

Shan elders had offered to the priests. When we happened along, the priests were reciting prayers and continued to do so while we quietly observed the ceremony. When it was all over we inquired concerning the meaning of the ceremony and the Shan elders told us that the priests had been praying for them. During the past seven days of feasting they had killed a large number of animals and their slaying of those animals may have involved them in guilt and they wished to be free from all harmful consequences which might result from their actions.

From the above illustrations it is very evident that the eating and drinking customs of the above mentioned races, have very definite relationship to their religious life and to their animistic beliefs and practices.

3. WORKING.

Most of the work done by the hill peoples of Kengtung is the work of agriculture; for all of them are farmers. Their type of farming involves, as has already been intimated, the indiscriminate slaughter of great mountain tracts of virgin timber land which annual felling of the forest is wrought by the aid of an axe with a small metal head. The Lahu farmer does not seem to mind the tremendous output of energy that is required to clear one of those highland tracts; but he does have a very special and fearful regard for the spirit that pervades the jungle which he has chosen to cultivate; for sometimes the cultivator when felling the trees has the misfortune to offend the Mountain spirit. This hardy highland farmer at the close of his day of labour returns to his village and home feeling tired and perhaps ill. If he should become sick at this time of tree-felling, he begins to suspect that he has offended the mountain spirit and after consultation with the village Seer, if it is decided that the man's illness has been caused by his having offended the mountain spirit, the following procedure is carried out to appease the offended spirit and to secure the healing of the sick man:- at the base of a newly felled tree, the Seer places a little tree freshly cut from the adjacent jungle. Also a small table or altar is made and set at the base of the tree which the sick man had cut down, and upon the table-altar the Seer sets eight candles, four tiny





paper flags and a little uncooked rice. An old earthenware jar is broken and the surfaces of four circular pieces of the jar are white-washed to represent silver and four other rounded pieces are painted yellow to represent the gold. With these preparations completed the Seer prays thus for the sick man:-

"Lord of the trees and mountains this man now ill has in his ignorance offended thee. If while cutting down the trees he has offended thee, we put a new tree in place of the destroyed one and if he has not offended the tree we will not offer a substitute. We bring to you an offering of Rs.80 in money weight and we ask you to have pity. We worship you and request that the sick man if he is bound by your silver or gold cords that you will loosen the cords and let him go free. If he be bound by ornamented cords or by the tail of a horse or elephant, we request you to cut those bonds and release him. You are the lord of the trees and the mountains and I request you not to frighten the sick man; for we worship you-----Sha".

With reference to the above matter, I recall a conversation which I had with an old respected Lahu man, who lived in a village near the bank of the Mekong river. This Lahu man of eighty years entered into the christian experience when he was about sixty years old. One evening when I was residing in his village, of his own accord he engaged me in conversation. During that talk he contrasted his previous animistic beliefs with his present christian experience. Under the old faith, he told me, they greatly feared to offend the spirit of the trees and forest. It was their custom before felling trees in a tract of ground which they had chosen for cultivation, first of all to make a sacrifice of a

fowl to the spirit of the tree, in order to secure the protecting care of the lord of the forest. While going to their highland fields should they have to pass by a pond or a lake while doing so they must not shout lest they offend the spirit of the lake. While passing a pond they must speak in the softest whispers. As animists he said that they stood in fear and awe of those nature spirits, but as christians they had a sense of God's protecting power and care.

The Lahu is a builder as well as a cultivator. For one reason or another, the Lahu frequently changes the village site and as a consequence new houses have to be built. In the old site there was frequent sickness and perhaps the villagers had reached the conclusion that there the spirits were very evil and malicious, "Ne hai ja" . "spirits very wild" as they express it, and so it became absolutely necessary for them to choose a new village site where the spirits were more favourably disposed to them, and where consequently they would enjoy better health. A Lahu when choosing a site for his house has many things to consider. Is the site good or not; will he and his family have good health; will he have good harvests and have plenty to eat and drink and will he be prosperous or will he be reduced to poverty by frequent litigation? These are some of the questions which occur to him and to discover whether or not a particular site is good he makes a place where he seeks the guidance of his gods. He digs a hole on the prospective site of his new house and makes the bottom

of the hole perfectly level. He then takes a stick about a hand's length and makes it four-sided and level at the top. This done he places it in the hole in an upright position like a house post and around this miniature post he carefully places seven paddy (rice) seeds all of which join each other. The hole is then covered by a plate. Then he proceeds to pray and to request the aid of his gods while he holds in his hands a cup of rice and two candles. He prays somewhat as follows:-

"Te a u Te a la, the creator of sun and moon with whom is eternal life and power, I come asking and requesting. If I am to be well in this new site bear witness to me by keeping the paddy seeds joined to each other and do not let them move or be moved. I call upon the gods of the heavens - Hpaya I and Hpaya Hpon; the gods under the waters - Hpaya Ko and Hpaya Na and Upashin and the gods under the earth - Nanhtalani, Ainan and Nanhkaima. God, these many come to my aid; for there is no eternal life dwelling in me. Sha"

After a minute's silence the lid is lifted from the hole and the contents are examined. If the paddy seed and the post are seen to remain in the ground just as they were placed then the house builder has been given a good sign. The man may start the building of his house with the hope of prosperity. If the paddy seed had found its way to the top of the post and had remained there that too would have been regarded as a good sign. If, on the other hand, upon lifting the lid from the hole ants or any other insects were to be seen at work among the paddy that would have been regarded by the builder as a bad omen and a warning to him not to build his house on that site. The latter sign would make it necessary for him to seek

another site. But if the signs are as he requested, he prepares to build his house and may choose to start the building on any of the following days:- Pig Day, Rat day, Cow day, Tiger day, Htawla day, Law day, Suh day, Horse day, Sheep day, Monkey day, Hen day, Dog day. When the house has been completed he places a pair of lighted candles at each of the four corners of the house; on the main beam of the house he sets another eight lighted candles and on the centre post of the house two more lighted candles. The householder thereupon requests the House spirit to come and occupy the house. This guardian and good spirit is requested to look after the interests of the household and to prevent evil spirits and sickness from entering the house.

An important worker of a Lahu community is the village blacksmith, for he makes all the implements of agriculture (such as, axes, dahs and hoes) for the members of the village. In exchange for his services the villagers help the blacksmith in the planting and harvesting of his crops.

In the mind of the animistic Lahu, the spirit of iron and brass is associated with the spirit of thunder and of lightning, and the original home of them all is in Peking. The name of the metal spirit is "Sho Ne" "Kui Ne." When it has been ascertained that the "Sho Ne" has been offended, small images of the blacksmith's utensils, such as bellow, hammer and pincers are offered to the "Sho Ne"; but before these

representations are presented, a white cock is killed and its blood is sprinkled over the images.

The Lahu women in addition to their work in the fields as the helpers of their husbands, do all the cooking and preparation of food both for the family and for the pigs; they also carry the wood and water and do the work of spinning and weaving of cotton cloth which they later dye and make into clothes for the family. Annually, evil spirits are driven from a Lahu village, and for a month previous to this occasion, the Lahu women are busily engaged in making all the clothes required by the family. They plan to have all the clothes finished long before the date set for the expulsion of the evil spirits in order that any and all spirits that may have made their abode in the newly made garments may be driven out on this great day of expulsion.

The Kaw cultivators when engaged in this arduous task of cutting down a highland tract do not make any offering to the spirit of the forest before they commence the actual work of felling. However, after a tree has been felled, on the remaining tree stump or on the felled trunk, the Kaws place a stone; this act may have as its hidden meaning the idea of the transference of responsibility from the woodsman to the stone and causes the evil spirit to attack the stone instead of the man. On the other hand the placing of the stone on the tree trunk may be the cultivator's silent and unspoken request for further supplies of physical energy to enable him to complete his work.

There are certain trees which must never be touched with dah or axe. These are the trees in the reserved area which is immediately adjacent to the village gateway and also another single tree which is worshiped by the Kaws and to which they give the name of "Mihsawn". The meaning of "Mihsawn" is "the ruler or creator of the earth." At the base of the "Mihsawn" the Kaws build a little hut-shrine and a pig is sacrificed and offered to the "Mihsawn" once a year. If anyone should be careless or thoughtless enough to lop a branch from trees in the reserved area or from the "Mihsawn" that person would be in serious danger of being bitten by the spirits of those trees. A cook which I had with me on one of my tours through the Kaw country got himself into trouble when we camped in a Kaw village to eat our noon-day meal. When gathering sticks to make the fire, the cook took some twigs from the reserved and sacred area. Before we left the village, one of the Kaw elders observed that their sacred precinct had been disturbed and he accused the cook of being the responsible party. The Kaw elder was justly annoyed and he said it would be necessary for the village to make a fresh sacrifice to the spirit of the gateway. This trouble between the elder and the cook was satisfactorily settled by the latter paying a small sum of money to the Kaw.

The village gateway of the Kaws is named, "Hpaw htuba Yehmi". This entrance way of Kaw villages is repaired once

a year, just before the rice seed is planted. Two new posts, six feet apart are set in the ground, and the posts are connected with a cross-bar. On each occasion when the "Hpaw Htuba Yehmi" is repaired, an offering is made to the spirits of the village watering place and also at the place which they call the head of the village. The bones of the fowl are divined to determine what are the future prospects.

When a Kaw decides upon a tract of ground which he wants to cultivate, he cuts away the bark from one of the trees, notifying his fellow villagers thereby that he has chosen that particular site. After selecting the area, if in the night he should have a dream, he would abandon that tract and proceed to make a new selection. Again, after days of hard work, felling trees and making ready the place for cultivation, if a Kaw farmer should see on his highland field at noon-time a species of monkey-"mawlawtweh"-a monkey that normally goes in the night and not the day-time, he will abandon that field even though he has spent weeks of labour upon it. One such case came under my observation a few years ago in the Mung Yawng District of Kengtung. A Kaw man when preparing his field for cultivation saw a "mawlawtweh" on his tract of land in the daytime which was a warning to him to abandon the land. The Christian Kaw teacher of the village secured the undesired highland field for a christian Kaw widow and her needy family and the work of cultivation of that field was carried on to completion without any harmful effects to the widow or her family.

All Kaw cultivators have to be especially careful about their general behaviour during the growth of the rice crops. Before the time set for the calling of the 'rice spirit' or 'Ca Ne' (Ca means paddy and Ne means spirit) the ears of the rice plant must not be carelessly handled; the farmer must not touch the dahs (large knives) of others in the highland field and neither must there be any sexual intercourse in the cultivated tract. Many farmers have small houses within the cultivated area and they live there, especially at the time when the crops are ripening for the harvest. However, Kaw women never stay over night in those field-huts, for it is their custom to return in the evening to the village and the husbands remain to guard the quickly ripening rice. At length when the rice is fully ripened and before it is cut with tiny hand sickles, the farmer takes a few rice stalks to his house. Two or three of the stalks are offered to the 'Myicha Ne' which is the necessary spirit altar of every Kaw family. Without the 'Myicha Ne' no Kaw could exist, for it is there the hopes and fears of the Kaw people are concentrated. 'Myicha' is the general term for earth or ground and 'Ne' as before noted is the word for 'spirit'. The Kaw cultivator is convinced that it is very necessary for him to be deferential to and to be on good speaking terms with the 'Myicha Ne', for upon his right relation to and proper regard for the 'Myicha Ne' his whole existence and that of his family depend. Therefore



the Kaw farmer offers the first-fruits to the 'Myicha Ne' at which time a little of the new rice is eaten by the family and a little of the seed of the first-fruits is carefully preserved for next year's planting.

At seed planting time the animistic beliefs of the Kaws are seen functioning. On the morning of the day chosen for their sowing the rice, they take two fowls and go to the village watering-place. The fowls are sacrificed and offered to the spirits and there by the waters, the offerers partake of a common meal. Before eating, however, they fling a little of the rice in offering to the spirits. They carefully examine the gizzard of the fowls and if they find any paddy seed there that to them is a very happy sign. Such seeds are taken and planted together with the already selected seed. At the head of the village, a cock and two small sows are killed. Their flesh is prepared and cooked and all the male members of the village engage in a feast; but part of the food is first of all offered on the open porch of a house, to the spirits. When the offerings and feasting are completed, the farmers undertake the work of planting.

Both women and men do the work of transporting the harvested paddy from the fields to the village. Some of the fields may be a mile or two distant from the village the paddy is for the most part carried in bags on their backs. Some Kaws are sufficiently prosperous to own bullocks

which are trained to do this heavy work of paddy transportation. However, before paddy in bulk can be brought into the village an offering must first be made at a little hut-shrine which is to be seen in all Kaw communities.

The Kaws, like the Lahus, are not only farmers but they build their own houses. When choosing a village or house site the Kaw seeks the guidance of spirits. They take an egg and request the spirit, as they throw the egg into space, to let the egg crack open on the spot where it is desirable to build. Upon the first throw, if the egg does not crack open that place where the egg lies uncracked is considered not a desirable site. They keep on throwing the egg until their wish is granted. Still another means resorted to is the following:- They take three rice seeds and place them at night in a cup which is placed in the ground. If the seeds are there in the morning that is a sign that the site is all right; but should the seeds be missing that would be a warning to the builder to select another place.

When a new house has been finished and ready for occupancy the liver of a pig is examined to see whether the signs are propitious or not. If the veins of the liver do not run straight the house is not good and much prosperity is not to be expected. Before the first fire is lit in the new house, part of the contents of a raw egg and a portion of sticky rice are taken and placed on the fire-place which is on the floor. The husband and wife are the first persons to enter the house and when they enter they bring with them

the "Myicha Ne" altar, which they set up in the new house. A pig is killed and cooked and the elders of the village are feasted. After destroying the old and vacated house the "Myicha Ne" is requested to come and take up his residence in the new house. The elders pronounce their benedictions and congratulations.

The rearing of domestic animals is another phase of work that engages the time and attention of the Kaw farmer. There are some very definite rules concerning domestic animals to which every villager, from the highest to the humblest member, must strictly adhere. No abnormally formed animals are permitted to live in a Kaw community. A buffalo with a broken horn or a horn from which blood is oozing is not allowed to live. The spirits do not give permission to rear such creatures. There must at least be three pigs to a litter. If less than three are born, the one or two must be killed. A litter of pigs large or small if born inside the village boundary, is not allowed to live and aborted pigs are also tabu.

Certain restrictions regarding work must be observed in case of death in a Kaw family. Not until the coming of the new moon can all the usual daily work be resumed by the bereaved family. In case of death there must be no paddy-pounding by the members of the bereaved household nor by any of the villagers until after the corpse has been buried and no villager is allowed to pound rice until after the bereaved

household has pounded theirs. Under normal conditions there must be no rice pounding after breakfast until about two p.m. and no pounding after sunset. On Kaw "holy days" there must be neither farming nor rice pounding, nor wood-cutting.

Somewhat similar customs prevail among the animistic Kachin race. At paddy-planting time the Kachin farmer offers fowls and eggs and requests the spirits to keep away insects, rot and wild animals from destroying his crops. Just before threshing time the Kachin cultivator makes an offering to the spirit of the jungle. The offering consists of a pig, and when the sacrifice is made, the spirit is requested to protect the paddy from being devoured by pigeons, rats and thieves. A further petition is added, requesting that the whole of the crops may be safely garnered, that it may be sufficient for all their needs, and that while they eat of it the quantity may not diminish. This spirit is addressed as the ruler of the jungles, the careful watcher of the forests and the dweller in trees and rocks. Like the Lahus and Kaws, the Kachins make an offering of the first-fruits of the harvests, and under the chapter "Sacrifice and Offerings" we will describe that ceremony in some detail. "No reaping can be done until the household first to sow the seed has made offering to the House Nats of that particular household," \*

\*Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States  
Vol.1.Part I. p.426.

The Kachin people build very large and long houses which require an enormous amount of labour. Before starting work of construction offerings of fowl and eggs are made to the household spirits. The spirits are requested to eat until they are fully satisfied and the favour of the spirits is asked that the house may be successfully completed and that the owners may enjoy health and strength when later they will be the occupants. The attention of the spirits is also called to the size of the fowl offered; for it is both big and tall.

Domestic animals are committed to the protection of guardian spirits, that the animals may increase; be kept free from disease, remain untouched by evil spirits and not be killed by tigers. When Kachin cows or buffaloes go into decline and are thin, offering of eggs and a strip of buffalo skin are offered to the offending spirit and he is requested not to bite the cattle; for the spirit's bite makes the cattle thin. The Kachin asks the spirit to make his cattle fat and he gives his pledge that if his request is granted now, he will later feed the spirit with his fat cattle. Like the Lahus and Kaws, the Kachins rest from all labour on their holy days.

The Shans are cultivators of the fertile valleys and are therefore the owners of all the most valuable and most productive land throughout the State. He grows his rice crop by the method of wet cultivation. Stripped to the waist, he

drives his buffalo and plough through muddy clay soil that has been water-soaked for days. He first plants the paddy seed in nursery beds making an offering to the spirit and requesting that the tender plants may find protection. Later, when the grown rice-plants are transplanted in the fields, another offering is made to the guardian spirit of the rice field. "Shans believe that good spirits watch over fruit trees and crops but they are not as strong as the evil demons who destroy the harvests." \*

With reference to the rearing of domestic animals, Mrs.Milne has written these very interesting lines. I should preface her remarks by saying that the business of herding cattle in the jungle is mostly done by children. "The jungle is a place of terrors for little people. There are not only leopards and bears and tigers but also spirits both bad and good. Some trees are well known as spirit trees. If,when there is no wind, one branch of a tree shakes its leaves, while the leaves on the rest of the tree are still then the boys are certain there is a spirit moving in the tree.--- It is not surprising that the real and unreal dangers of the jungle make the children herd their cattle in company." \*

The same author makes the following reference to the Shan as a housebuilder. When the house posts are placed in prepared holes in the ground,"the holes at first are not quite filled up and when every post is in position a curious

ceremony takes place. The builder, with his friends, indulge in an extra chewing of betel-nut, with the usual lime and spices accompanying it. This is to insure a large supply of saliva, to which little devils which hide under the house posts have a strong objection. The men chew, then they expectorate copiously into each hole and when the little devil has fled in disgust, the hole is quickly filled to the top with earth, the earth being pounded hard to prevent his return." \*

During one of my tours in the eastern part of Kengtung, near the large Shan village of Mung Wa, which village was devastated two years ago when the Nam river overflowed its banks, I met an old Shan man waiting to find out if the signs were good to build his new house. He was living in a temporary shack and he was waiting to see if the site on which the hut was built was a desirable place on which to erect his permanent house. When he spoke with us he eagerly inquired if we were skilled in determining a suitable house site, as to whether or not it were free from evil spirits. That perplexed old Shan man was not quite decided whether the site which he had selected was entirely free from evil spirits, so he was watchfully waiting. The Shan, like his more primitive hill neighbours, fears those powerful spiritual forces, which he believes have some very definite relationship to the labour of his hands. I know of some Shans who live in a village near the Siam border and are afraid to dig a certain ditch that runs through their paddy fields. They pay the Christian Lahus of

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a neighbouring village to dig the ditch every year for them. Those Shans say that when they dug the ditch the evil spirits bit them and made them sick.



## 4.

MATING.

It would be quite natural to expect that one of the great events of human life, namely marriage, would in some very definite way be related to the religious beliefs of these animistic peoples and our expectations are confirmed as we survey the marriage customs of the Lahus.

Formerly, it was customary for Lahu young people to do their "courting" in the house and in the presence of their elders. The lovers would sit, one at either side of the fire-place and would engage their time singing love songs to each other as follows:-The young man sings to the girl these lines; for there is among the Lahus a standard language of courtship:.

While I was in my house  
Lying down on my bed,  
The light of you was so bright  
As it came in through my door.  
I thought it was the light of the moon  
I thought it was the light of the morning star  
I thought it was the light of the sun.

The love poem is of great length, so long that it is only desirable here to give the substance of it in which we shall observe in the mutual fears expressed by the lovers, subtle allusions to animistic thought and beliefs. The lover goes on to say that

He lifted his hand to his eyes  
To shade them from the light  
And whirling around three times on his heel  
He observed that the light was the light of his love.

The poem represents the young man as saying that he has a village "Hkasheh" or chief and he has obtained the permission of the "Hkasheh" to visit his lady friend. He also has parents and they have given him permission to go on his journey of love. The song pictures the young man starting out and he passes through the lonely and dangerous jungle towards the village where the girl lives. He follows the rays of light and as he pursues his journey on the path before him he sees a pair of quail and upon seeing them his heart sinks; for he thinks the quail are the spirit of his lover who has suddenly died. Here the young woman speaks a word of encouragement and tells him that he should cause the quail to fly away; for the quail are not her spirit at all. She further says that he is not a cowardly man. Continuing his love adventure he comes up against other discouraging circumstances. He meets another pair of birds, a pig with a yellow tooth, a bear, a wild fowl, a crow, a big log of wood, a marble house and then seven big rivers and seven mountains. At one river there was a big and fearsome dragon that was shooting out its tongue at him. At the sight of all the different birds and animals his heart becomes fearful, for he interprets each in turn to be the spirit of the girl he loved. When he arrived at the big log he walked around it three times and felt it very difficult to separate himself

from it. He wanted to take his axe and cut it up and from the wood build a house. When he saw the marble house, he said that if he were not permitted to live in it he would buy an axe from the blacksmith and with its aid he would build a house of marble. If his hands and feet should not be sufficiently strong to build a marble house, he would certainly build one of wood. Then the girl responds and says to the young man that the quail, the pair of birds, the pig with the yellow tooth, the bear, wild fowl and crow are not her spirit. Those birds and animals, she says, because they have no ground to cultivate and no stores of food are compelled to search for food wherever they can find it. You had better take your axe and from that log you saw prepare timbers and build the house. As regards the marble house, she says, if you do not live there I will not live there and her final word assures him of her acceptance of him, when she says, "Take the iron which God has created and cut down the trees and build a house and then come for me. The threatening dragons that you saw, if those made you afraid and caused your soul to flee from your body, I will take the cocks and the hens and call your soul back."

Lahu marriages are arranged by mediators or "go-betweens," and the marriage ceremony is conducted by the village priest or by some responsible elder of the community.

A large pig is killed and the whole village feasts on its flesh. The neck of the animal is always reserved for and eaten by the "go-betweens". The bride and bridegroom, with their faces covered with a sheet of thin white cloth, sit in the presence of the village elders and priest. The young couple are given candles and each of them lights two and sets them reverently before the elders. The priest fills a cup full to the brim of cold water and gives it to the groom to drink and when he has drunk all of it, the same cup is again filled to the brim with water from the same jug and this second cup is given to the bride to drink. Extreme care must be taken by both of them not to spill a drop of the water; for if on this occasion water is spilled, no children will be born to the young couple. When they have both finished drinking the water, the priest invokes a blessing upon them and it is significant that the request of the priest is addressed to "G'uisha" or "Awpa G'uisha" which means, "Father God."

"Our Father, God, to-day these two children of thine are a pair like the sun and moon, like the stars and meteors. Let their children be plentiful as the fruit of a tree; make their life as unending as the river and rock; let the cattle under their house increase; prosper their fields and in their search for food let them discover the eternal food."

The mating season of the Kaws is during the months of December January and February. By the end of November their

crops have been harvested and during the three months immediately following the harvest the young people have much leisure time. The three months period, so far as weather is concerned, is the best time of the year, for there is no rain. It is the winter season, when the mornings and evenings are cold and crisp and in the daytime the heat of the sun is less fierce. Favourable weather conditions permit and encourage frequent visitation by the young people to all the Kaw villages in the district.

The Kaws mate early in life and it is their custom to allow promiscuous sexual intercourse between the sexes before the establishment of the marriage relationship. There is a public courting place in every Kaw village which is called the "Deh Hkawng." There the young people of both sexes meet at night and play and sing love songs to each other. Little house sheds adjacent to the parents' houses are set apart as places in which the young people can meet privately and the young couples repair to those houses at the close of the more public meeting at the "Deh Hkawng." A Kaw man while visiting in a village other than his own particular village is not allowed to court as above mentioned; he may do so only within his own village group. In the daytime, outside the village, at work in the jungle or when going to or returning from market, the young folk meet and sing love songs to each other and when distance divides them they shout their love songs across the hills and valleys.

Kaws can marry without the consent and approval of their parents. Marriage by elopement is not by any means an uncommon thing among the Kaws. However there must be no compulsion of the girl; for if the girl does not of her own will freely consent to run off with the young man and should he by force carry her off, the marriage would not be recognized and the young man would be fined by his village chief. On the other hand, as sometimes happens, a young Kaw couple are returning together from the Shan market place and they fall in love with each other. Should they decide to elope, the young man is quite free, according to Kaw custom to immediately take the girl to his own home and village. Friends of the young couple go to inform the girl's parents that their daughter has gone off to get married. Should the parents desire to prevent the marriage under such circumstances they may follow in hot pursuit of the elopers; but if the young couple have had time to cook and eat an egg together in his house, before the arrival of the girl's parents, they cannot prevent the marriage from taking place. Sometimes marriage by elopement is prevented by fond parents by their promising a big wedding feast, provided the marriage is consummated according to regular marriage custom.

Kaw marriage ceremonies always take place in the village of the bridegroom and the bride is conducted to the village by her friends. She takes with her a hog's head which the Kaws look upon as the price of the bride. The

rest of the pig is prepared and fed to the members of the village which she is about to leave. The bride receives no presents; the bridegroom and the elders are the only parties who receive gifts. The girl upon entering the groom's village does not go directly to the house of the groom but to the house of some elderly woman, and while there the bride adorns herself in white clothing. Having so attired herself, she proceeds at once to the house of the groom. There her first duty is to carry through a ceremony of pretension during which she plays at drawing water and carrying wood. With water jugs in a basket slung over her back she makes a hurried trip down the ladder-steps of the house and goes through the motions of drawing water. While she is doing so and while making a hasty retreat inside the house, the young people standing at the foot of the steps fling lumps of cow manure at her. They do so again when she descends the steps a second time on this occasion to pretend that she is chopping firewood. This besmirching of the bride with manure, the Kaws say, is to secure for her good luck and great blessing. After she has changed her clothes the bride is now ready for the marriage ceremony which is performed by the village elders. Meantime the marriage feast is being prepared by the younger members of the community, though before anyone partakes of the food, part of it is offered by the elders to the "Myicha Ne" in the

house of the groom's parents. The newly married couple are allowed to retire in peace and are left undisturbed in their own little house which is adjacent to the house of the groom's parents. A Kaw girl virtually becomes the slave of her husband, in the sense that the village law prescribes that she cannot visit the home of her own parents for more than three days in the entire year. All her time must be devoted to her husband and to the affairs of her own household. Frequently Kaw men are opium smokers and when such is the case the burden of work falls upon the Kaw woman.

Winning a girl by magic is sometimes accomplished by the Kaws. If a Kaw girl does not want to marry her suitor but he wants to marry her and her only, such a man may resort to magic in order to win her. A wax from two different kinds of bees which live in the same hollow of a tree is collected by the Kaws. This is taken and magically blown upon while a formula is recited. Part of this magically treated wax is stealthily rubbed or concealed on a garment of the wanted girl. When this is done it is impossible for her to keep away from the young man. If she does not see him, she is restless and impatiently longs to see and meet him, and though she does not love him, she finds it impossible to resist his attentions. Such marriages when consummated, the Kaws say, are neither happy nor prosperous and if children result from the union of such people, they do not live.



If a young unmarried Kaw woman becomes pregnant, the whole countryside is advertized to secure for her a husband. However, in such cases where the girl can point to the young man whom she claims as the one responsible for her pregnant condition he must marry the girl. Where responsibility cannot be located and there is no husband in sight for the girl soon to become a mother, everything is done to try to secure a husband for her; for it is considered a disgrace among the Kaws for a child to be born out of wedlock. Such unfortunate girls are compelled to take any kind of Kaw or man of another race who offers to become her husband. She has no say in the matter, if she knows not the person responsible for her condition.

After years of married life if a Kaw wife has not borne any children, two means are resorted to in order to make her become a mother. The first of these two methods I have already mentioned, with regard to the second means, the Seer consults the spirits and afterwards announces to the barren wife that her sterility is occasioned by the river in the spirit-world becoming blocked with leaves and weeds which prevent the waters of the stream from flowing freely. Therefore to remove the cause of barrenness the soul of the Seer goes to the river in the spirit-world and takes away the obstructions and when this is done the sterile woman is able to bear children; but never more than two children can be borne by this supernatural or spiritual aid of the Seer.

There are occasions when a Kaw husband must refrain from sexual intercourse with his wife. On all occasions when offerings are being made to the "Myicha Ne" as for example, at paddy planting time, during the growth of the crops, and at harvest time. When on those occasions the village priest sends forth his soul to the spirit-world to discover what spirit has been offended, he must stay separate from his wife. The successful hunter upon his return from a hunting expedition must not sleep with his wife for a period of seven days. The same rule pertains when villagers return from a fishing expedition. After a child is born in a Kaw family, the husband must refrain from sexual intercourse with his wife for ten cycles of time. One cycle is twelve days. If during that time the husband should disregard this-not-too-strictly-adhered-to law and if the wife were to report the case to a responsible village elder, the offending husband would be fined, one pig. This one hundred and twenty days prohibitive period is largely because of physical reasons, namely, to prevent the wife from getting what the Kaws call "Napaku", which is a condition of health when the colour of the face is bad; the mother becomes thin and loses vitality.

While many Kaw men have just one wife, it could not be said of the Kaws that they are a monogamous race; for many of them have two wives and others have three. The Lahus, their close neighbours, are a strictly monogamous race.

The Kachins like some other hill races of Burma mature and mate early in life, and as they are animists they

have the practice of consulting the spirits with relation to the institution of marriage. Some Kachin families seek a bride for their son, when the girl is still an infant. While she is yet in her infancy her parents sometimes receive in advance the price of the bride's dowry, the paying parents of the son being perfectly content to wait until the girl reaches maturity, when the long looked for marriage is likely to be consummated.

Fond parents on occasions resort to divination in order to discover if a certain girl which they have in mind for their son to marry is suitable or not. When a marriage has been arranged and the day for the wedding chosen, the whole village and people from neighbouring communities come to give their congratulations and to partake of the marriage feast. Fowls and pigs and, if the family is a prosperous one, even oxen and buffalo may be slain to provide sufficient food and plenty for all the wedding guests. Those animals are presented to the domestic spirits and upon the bride and groom the blessing of those good spirits is requested to come so that they may be one in will and wish and that their amours may be fructified.

Before the bride is allowed to enter her new house, the Kachins have the custom of making the bride pass through a "Kanhpan". A "Kanhpan" consists of a double row of thatch grass or straw planted in the ground in straight lines about two yards long. Previous to the bride's passage through

this "Kanhpan" two fowls and a small pig are killed near the "Kanhpan" which are offering to evil spirits which may have followed the "go-betweens" who arranged the marriage. The bodies of the fowls and pig are put in the grass of the "Kanhpan" and some of their blood gets sprinkled on the thatch. Passing through the middle of the "Kanhpan" is a log or bar over which the bride has to walk. C.Gilhodes writing of this ceremony says:-"Then one of the matrons takes the bride by the hand and makes her pass with her retinue through the centre of the Kanhpan; at the same time the young men check the evil spirits that might follow her. The young woman is henceforth purified and rid of the Nats which accompanied her; yet if she slips whilst walking on the bar, it is a sign that she will die young. She will be long lived on the contrary and have a numerous family if her dress takes no stain of blood; should it be spotted ever so little, a maraung would be supposed to dog her destiny."\*

The final act of the Kachin priest in conducting the marriage ceremony is to drive away any and all haunting spirits from the bride and transfer those spirits into plants and animals. Thereupon the priest gives his parting benediction to the bride and wishes for her that she may prove to be as strong as iron; beautiful as jewels; good as liquor and as fertile as millet seed.

5.            PLAYING - DANCING.

It should be said most clearly that both children and adults engage in play and in amusements without any regard to or thought concerning evil spirits. Indeed it is during those periods of recreation when the animistic mind is temporarily free from the harassing fear of spirits which seem to him to invade every other avenue of his life and activity. We shall see, however, that some forms of play in which these animistic peoples indulge seem to have religious origins and connexions, dancing especially being related to some of the deeper experiences of life.

There are two periods of the year when Lahus cease from work to engage in play and recreation and those occasions are, first, the time when they eat the new rice and second, when they celebrate the New Year. On those occasions the boys and girls play at spinning-top and another game that resembles skittles. This latter game is played with a giant bean, about an inch and a half in diameter. The beans are procured from huge pods that grow wild in the jungle. The adults spend their time playing at tug-o'-war and dancing. It is thought that during the ensuing year the defeated tug-o'-war team will not be favoured with as much prosperity as their victors. The idea of future blessing seems to be closely associated with their different forms of play, for it is customary on those festive occasions for the elders of the village to pray to "G'uisha"

requesting his blessing upon the community.

Dancing, accompanied with the playing of musical pipes, is the chief form of amusement and recreation for the Lahus. A Lahu tradition relates that when the Lahus did not know how to praise "G'uisha", Peutaw Ayehepa, a person whose origin is unknown, made for them a "naw" - a musical pipe from a gourd, with which they were to praise "G'uisha." Upon first trial the gourd-pipe produced no melodious notes, so it was left on the stump of a tree to which a bird came and it pecked holes in the "naw" and it was found that the bird pecked gourd-pipe was now capable of producing harmonious music.

The Lahu "Naw" is their favourite musical instrument. It is made of a gourd, with bamboo pipes fitted into the body of the gourd. This simple musical instrument is capable of producing four or five distinct notes, all of which are in the minor key. Lahu young men take their "NAW" with them almost everywhere they go, but the special occasion when the pipe comes into its place of honour, is when the village spends the evening hours in dancing. Young and middle-aged men participate in the dance and it is a performance worth seeing. A Lahu village ushers in the New Year with much feasting and dancing. During the day games are played but the night and early morning hours are devoted to the dance. Some twenty bare-footed men form in a

circle and in the centre of the circle are placed some lighted pine splinters by the light of which and by the additional light of the moon, the dance is performed. The leaders of the dance are the players of the gourd-pipes to the music of which dancers move in perfect rythm. The circle of dancing men keep moving first to the left, then back again to the right and the dance is both artistically and vigourously executed. Those who play the "Naw" are doubly exhausted for they both dance and play at one and the same time and as they are the leaders of the dance, its success rests largely upon them. Those not playing the pipes must follow the lead of the musicians. Lahu women do not usually take part in the dance for they are not skilled in dancing like the men. The women, should they wish, may have a part in the dance by their forming a second circle around and immediately behind the men. Their part is a very minor one; for they simply join hands and keep moving their arms backwards and forwards. Lahu women are usually too modest to participate in the dance but when they do, they help to brighten it up, especially if they wear their long coats the breasts of which are covered with a mass of silver buttons which shine and glitter in the moon light. The general effect is one of harmony and rythm. The whole community turns out for the dance and during the intervals there is much laughter and good feeling expressed.

Lahu dances imitate natural things such as the growth of crops and the motions of certain animals, as the

names of some of the following dances suggest:-

Heh Daw Kai -----Preparation of Soil for planting.  
 Ca ti Kai -----Planting the Seed.  
 Ca Beh Ka.-----Wind Blowing the Paddy.  
 Ca Geu Kai.-----Reaping the Paddy.  
 Ca Daw Kai.-----Threshing the Paddy.  
 Umeh Kai. -----Motion of Bird Hopping.  
 G'a g'a Kai.-----Hen Scratching.  
 Ape Te Kai. -----Pounding Chilli.  
 Ya naw Kai. -----Motion of Making Baby Sleep.

When I first observed a Lahu dance my casual observance led me to think that the dance might be associated with the worship of fire; for on every occasion there was a burning light in the centre of the dancing circle of men; but I have been assured by the Lahus that their dance has no relation to fire-worship. The pine torches are placed in the middle of the ring with the sole purpose of giving light to the dancers. However, the Lahu dance does partake of a religious character; for the dance is executed with the thought in mind of driving away from the village sickness and death and securing for the community peace and prosperity. Guns are fired to remind "G'uisha" that his dancing children stand in need of blessing.

The very industrious Kaw people set aside time for play and recreation. The boys and girls of the Kaw race have many different games which they play both separately and jointly and those recreations are means of diversion for their otherwise strenuous lives. Dancing and music are the two favourite forms of amusement and the Kaws have the same kind of musical flute as the Lahu and they dance in the same manner as the Lahus. The two great playtimes of the Kaw



occur after the weeding of the crops and at the celebration of the New Year.

Every year after the weeding of the crops, every Kaw village builds a community swing which they call "Auh Luh U". The makers of the swing are the "Pu Ba" or the makers of the sacred gate. When the "Auh Luh U" is being erected or rather just before its erection an offering is made to the "Myicha Ne" at which time they request or command all forms of sickness and disease to leave the community and go to China, Burma and other foreign countries. Go anywhere but do not stay here is the purport of their requests. The sacrifice consists of a fowl, the offering of which is the chief event on the first day of the "AUH LUH U" celebration. After this sacrifice the villagers remain quiet for the rest of the day. On the second day the posts of the swing are prepared and also the ropes with which it is tied together. By noon time they have completed the erection of the Auh Luh U and the villagers stand by ready for play. The person who placed the posts of the Auh Luh U in position is given the honour of the first swing but before he swings the villagers take a lump of earth and a tuft of grass which they put on the seat of the swing and when these have finished rocking to and fro, the placer of the posts takes his swing. On the third day practically the whole village one after another takes a swing and they keep the swing going all day long and some are still swinging on the fourth day. For a period of thirteen days every

villager has permission to use the swing but at the end of the thirteen day period no one is allowed to use the swing. Should anyone's cow or buffalo knock the swing down, the owner of the cow or buffalo would be required to make an offering of a pig and a fowl to the Myicha Ne. If the swing rope breaks, as it does sometimes, even resulting in fatal accidents, the unfortunate person is said to be the recipient of blessing. No one who does not want to swing is compelled to do so which would suggest that the act of swinging in itself is not related to evil spirits. The Kaws say that by carrying out their custom of swinging, the health of the community is secured. At New Year time the chief form of amusement is top-spinning.

The Kachins dance in the presence of the solemn mystery of death. When Kachin elders die their corpses are kept for two or three days during which time a ceremony of dancing is executed. As regards the origin of dancing the Kachins have a rather interesting story which has a religious significance. At the beginning of time God made man with bodies free from sickness and death; but the devil came to God and tried to deceive him by telling him that man had died. Because God was omniscient he did not pay any attention to the devil's attempt at deception. He replied by saying, "I know man is not dead so do not try to deceive me." The devil returned to his place and caught a big black squirrel, which he killed and wrapped in many blankets. He

then went to God and said ~~that~~ he had proof that man had died. God looked and he was uncertain this time as to whether man was dead or not, so he called his angels and sent them to the earth to see if man had died. God instructed his messengers to cover the soles of their feet with wax before they danced on top of the blankets which wrapped what the devil said was a human corpse. The angels acted according to instructions and as the result of their dancing they uncovered the body of the black squirrel. When the angels returned to God and told him of the devil's deception, God was very angry and cursed, saying "I created man with an immortal body disposed neither to sickness nor death but now since he wants illness and death, hereafter let him be sick and die, even let him be destroyed. The story goes on to relate that shortly afterwards an elder died and his friends from far and near assembled to divide the inheritance of the deceased. After the property had been portioned out, instructions were given to the assembled company that on their return journey they should observe perfect silence when passing through a certain tree lizard village. One of the returning elders was riding a pony and, because he could not ride very well, the pony became restless and began to neigh. The tree lizard heard the neighing pony and came out to inquire what had happened. The old man deceived the lizard and said that man was blessed with immortal life, with freedom from sickness and death. White hair would be made black and loose and shaky teeth would become firm. The

consoling words of the elder did not appeal to the lizard, for at that very moment a member of the lizard's family was sick and dying. The lizard was very angry because of the deceptive words of the old man and it uttered a curse upon man to this effect:- "Hereafter let the ears of your paddy be as short as my tail and the stem of your paddy as thick as my leg."

The Kachins say that a long time ago a priest came from heaven to earth and that he suddenly disappeared in a clump of bamboo and though he was diligently sought for he could not be found. Because of this, the Kachins when dancing at the time of death, have the custom of placing a bamboo tree in the centre of the circle of dancers. Two men lead the dance and it is the duty of the others to watch carefully and to follow every motion of the leaders; for if the dance is conducted carelessly and if mistakes are made, members of the community will become sick. While the dance is in progress the two leaders carry spears and they are financially remunerated for their important services.

Concerning the "Kabung Dum" or night dance of the Kachins, C. Gilhodes writes the following:- "The Kabung Dum is repeated nearly every night until the close of the obsequies, but then it begins inside the house near the catafalque. It is faithfully done because it is a display of affection and also for fear of the spirits of the dead. They are persuaded that unless the living accomplish it, the

departed ones will come and do it and they are sure on their leaving to take with them some minla whose absence will cause another demise." \*

The Shan people of Kengtung are a festival loving people and they have much leisure time which they spend in play and amusement. Every year in March, during the full moon they hold what is called the Tabaung festival, during which time many temporary booths are erected adjacent to the brick pagodas on the end of the Kengtung plain in the district of Nawng Hpa. To the rythmical beating of drums and clanging of cymbals, the Shan people excitedly dance and shout during the day and the night. This festival lasts for four or five days and as gambling is legalised for the entire period of the festival, the Shans who are inveterate gamblers, spend much of their time in the gambling booths.

A month later follows the Tagoo festival, which is the Burmese New Year. The Kengtung Sawbwa makes it an occasion for all the subjects of Kengtung State to do him obeisance. From all the four corners of the extensive state, the Sawbwa's officials come to Kengtung bringing their gifts and offering their homage. On an appointed day a great and solemn assembly gathers in the throne room of the Sawbwa's palace and the Sawbwa, beautifully dressed, sits motionless on his throne and listens to addresses recited by his officials. After the Sawbwa pronounces his benediction, he

\* The Kachins, Rel.& Myth. p.245.

quickly disappears through doors behind the throne and the assembled company quickly disperses and hurries from the hall as speedily as possible; for the Tagoo festival is a water festival. Captain Enriquez refers to this and remarks, "It is the custom for the town folk to besiege the palace during the gadaw, and to mercilessly duck the assembly with buckets and squirts as it emerges in its best clothes. ----- But woe betide the fool who lingers to retaliate. Buckets and squirts only concentrate on him, and he is drowned." \*During the first day of this Tagoo festival a procession passes through the main street of the town and the residents of the houses on either side of the street squirt and throw water on the playful marchers until they are drenched. This present custom of water throwing "is merely the survival of an ancient rite for invoking rain. For this is the end of a season of long drought when "Mango Showers" have just begun to refresh and moisten the dusty ground."\*

The most important Shan festival is Kengtung is about the end of September at the Tha-din-jut full-moon, and it is called the Mee-pu-zaw or fire offering festival and sometimes it is named "The Feast of Lights." It is the one and only night in the year when the town of Kengtung is illuminated. At intervals down the main street of the city huge torches of pine, twenty feet high and two feet in circumference are placed in the ground. By the illumination of those torches,

\* Capt.C.M.Enriquez "A Burmese Lonelinesspp.26.27,28.

thousands of Shans both men and women, visit the Buddhist temples at night for the purpose of reverently placing lighted candles in the presence of the silent Buddha. Fire Balloons of giant proportions are inflated with hot air and when the balloons make their upward ascent, they are watched by hundreds of eager eyes; for to the tails of the balloons are attached squibs and fireworks which are timed to go off when a certain altitude has been reached and before stronger breezes carry them far out of sight. In this custom we doubtless have a survival of some ancient rite of fire worship, despite the fact that at the present time it is definitely related to Buddhism.

The Shans play and amuse themselves when contesting in a game of tug-o'-war for the corpse of one of their highly respected Buddhist priests. We have frequently seen the preparations for this ceremony. Upon a huge and cumbersome wooden cart, which is specially made for the occasion is mounted the ornate coffin of the priest. To the wooden cart, long and large home-made ropes are attached. With much laughing and shouting the hearse is hauled out to the open paddy flats and there the tug-o'-war contest takes place. The competing sides pull and tug to win the dead priest's body; for to the winners is awarded the privilege of cremating the corpse.

6. TRAVELLING - TRADING.

A good deal of the travelling that is done in Kengtung State is for the purpose of trade; but whether travel is undertaken either for trade or for visitation of friends, if the journey involves a long period of absence from home, it is the custom (under these circumstances) to resort to divination before the traveller starts on his journey. Travellers in lonely jungles have much to fear. There are robbers, wild animals, evil spirits and illness that may encounter them as enemies, so before they begin their journey they want to know if the signs which the chicken bones show are unmistakeably in their favour.

Travellers are wary of certain places, such as high mountain tops, ponds and caves; for the spirits that dwell in those places are believed to be most ferocious. When I had climbed to the top of the Tenasserim Range of mountains, at the spot that marks the Burma-Siam boundary, I saw there a miniature shrine, mounted upon a post, and in the shrine was a little offering-cup, where perhaps some lonely traveller had placed his offering to the Mountain-Spirit.

If Kaws are going on a long journey, it is customary for them to kill a fowl and they look for a sign by examination of the fowl's eyes. The eyes are extracted from the dead bird and if the eyes are transparent, clear and free from blood,



those are favourable signs; but should there be traces of blood the journey must not be undertaken.

When a Kaw man camps in the jungle, upon rising in the morning, with a stick he stirs up the place where he has slept, shakes his blanket and commands his soul to rise. "Tu! Tu!!" or "Rise! Rise!!", he says to his soul; for he is tremendously afraid of his soul being left behind while his body goes marching on the next stage of the journey. Under certain circumstances the Kaws are not allowed to travel. If a tiger kills a domestic animal, the villagers are forbidden to go anywhere that day. All must remain in the village. On Va Nyi and Sheh Nyi, which are two days in the Kaw calendar, there must not be any travel; for it was on those days the Kaw race was lost and found. Again, when the village is under Tabu as the result of twin children being born, there must not be any travel to and from the village for the period of a month.

Travellers entering Kaw villages must observe certain rules. Unsheathed dahs must not be carried through a Kaw village for an unsheathed sword is carried to the grave at time of burial. Because it is a custom to whistle at time of death, whistling is prohibited at other times. Upon entering a Kaw house, wearing of hats or holding umbrellas over the head is forbidden, for the reason that the Seer covers his head in the act of discerning the spirits. Smoking and chewing of tobacco are not allowed when entering a Kaw village and visitors must stay away from bamboo

clumps within village bounds. Neither must travellers ride their ponies in a Kaw village for to do so would be very displeasing to the spirits. Tabu parents of twins when they return from their banishment enter the village dressed with a certain kind of leaves. Those leaves must not be brought into a Kaw village by anyone on any other occasion. Races other than Kaws, when residing in a Kaw village must observe Kaw customs, otherwise they will be fined.

Travellers who believe that even the food they eat may be affected in some way by evil spirits, are very careful as to the food they eat. The Kaws tell a story concerning three men who set out to sell a cow. At noon-time they became very hungry and they entered a village at the forks of a road and there bought some fish. After eating the fish all three of them became stupid and foolish and the only road they knew was the one which led back to the village. When they arrived home, the Seer of their village told them that the fish they had eaten was the food of the devils and if they wished to be cured of their madness they must make an offering to the offended spirits.

In some of their practices, the Buddhist Shans are extremely animistic regarding travel and trade. The Kengtung Sawbwa, for instance, when starting out on a long journey makes a mock departure from the palace, with the idea of evading the evil spirits. He leaves the palace and goes

across the street to the nearby bungalow of his son in which he spends the rest of the day and night and the following morning he actually sets out on the journey. Once every year the Sawbwa makes a trip to the hot sulphur springs, seven miles from Kengtung. A long time ago a Sawbwa who had a very bad skin disease was cured by the healing waters of those springs and ever since that time it has been the custom of the Kengtung Sawbwa to visit the sulphur springs once a year. When he returns from the baths to his palace, the whole town welcomes his return. In the stately procession may be seen a fully saddled but riderless pony; but it is really not riderless, for on it are riding the protective and guardian spirits of the Sawbwa.

In the lonely jungle there is a spirit called the "Pe Tum Moi" which the animistic Shan traveller greatly fears. This spirit inhabits jungle camps and travellers have to be particularly wary of him, especially when drawing water and collecting firewood. The "Pe Tum Moi" may come in the form of a tiger to bite and kill both ponies and men. The Miao and the Yau peoples of Chieng Hung, Yunnan, China, say that the "Pe Tum Moi" is a frog in the daytime and when placed in a cage it disappears in the night. In the lonely and dreadful jungle, just before dark it is the custom of Shan travellers to make an offering at the base of a tree at which time they ask for protection from every evil power.

The traveller is very careful as to the place he may choose for his camp; for all haunted places must be avoided. During a journey which we made to French-Indo-Chine on which occasion our party touched the border of Yunnan and camped in the Mung Lom plain, we had an interesting conversation with one of the old Shan residents of the district. We had chosen to pitch our camp in the midst of a bamboo grove, in which was the ruin of an old Buddhist temple and to such a place as that the Shans give the name of "Va Han". It is a place that is believed to be haunted by ghosts. The old Shan man told us that centuries ago that part of Yunnan was invaded by the Siamese and at the time of the invasion the temple was destroyed, some of the priests were killed and others were taken captive to Siam. Eagerly this friendly Shan asked me if we were going to sleep in the bamboo grove and when I told him we planned to sleep there he said that he would not sleep there for anything; for the place was invaded with evil spirits that bite and make people sick. When I told him that we were not afraid of those spirits, he inquired if we had power over them and if we had, would we not please drive them away far.

During our travels we have opportunity to discover how profoundly the Shans believe in river spirits. In the most isolated parts of the State, the Shan ferry men will not take travellers across the rivers, unless an offering of a pice or two is made to the spirit of the river.

One evening I came to the Nam Hsim river at dusk and while I observed the current was swift at mid-stream, it did not appear to be deep. I asked the boatman if I could ride my pony across and he replied that last year a Chinese caravan arrived here and the leader decided to ride his big mule across the river and when he got to mid-stream yonder, he and his mule disappeared and nothing had been seen of them since. Those Shans apparently believed that the Chinaman was carried away by the spirit of the river. While our camp kit was crossing another river, a bed bundle fell from the raft into the stream but the Shan ferry man was clever enough to recover it. When he brought his raft back to the bank where we were waiting he said to us that we had forgotten to make an offering to the river spirit and for that reason the accident had happened to the bed bundle. I ventured a more scientific reason for the accident and suggested that he should repair his wobbly raft before taking us across. He ran off to the jungle and cut down a bamboo, made ropes of it and lashed down his raft more securely, with the happy result we all got to the other bank in safety.

At the top of high mountains, cairns may be frequently be seen. Those cairns are the accumulations of stones laid down by successive travellers who when depositing the stones offer a silent request for further supplies of physical energy with which to complete their long journeys. Leaves

placed on the top of huge ant hills express the same idea. If after a long journey a man should return ill to his home, he begins to wonder and question whether during his travels he has said or had done something that has made him an enemy, which enemy may now be practising the art of black magic and is causing him to be ill. If such were the case, the afflicted man would have to make an offering to the spirits in order to recover his health.

The Shan towns are the centres of trade throughout the State. In each of the bazaar or market centres there is a market nat whose favour is sought for the general prosperity of the district. In the old Kengtung bazaar there is a Nat House, where once a year offerings are made to the highly esteemed spirit. A few years ago new bazaar quarters were built in another part of the town and a new Nat House was erected to accommodate the bazaar spirit. Despite the fact that the new house is much more attractive than the old shrine, it is said that until now the market Nat has stoutly refused to move in to the new shrine and has continued to live in the old house.. A weird old woman in Kengtung, disposed to repeated illness, believed it was not right to build the new market place and she so persuaded a large number of the Kengtung inhabitants. As a result of her constant agitation her following increased in numbers and strength and she decided to bring the matter to the attention of the rulers. Sao Kawng Tai, the son of the Sawbwa patiently heard the

complaint of her delegation and to dispose of the case he sent word to the old lady requesting her that she should instruct the market nat to bring lots of money to him and he would build a new bazaar-presumably on the old site- as big and as substantial as the bazaar at Mandalay. Sao Kawng Tai told me that there had been no further complaint.

It is a belief of the Shan people that if offerings are not made yearly to the spirit of the market place, destructive epidemics and famine might occur in the city. Every Leap year small huts are built in the yard of the Sawbwa's Court house, where meat is cooked and offered to the spirits at which time the nats are requested to look after the welfare of the town.

A Shan man is extremely careful with regard to the kind of pony or ponies he keeps. If a pony had a circular flexure of the hair above the front legs or similar marks on the thighs such a pony is a very dangerous one to possess. A man who owns such a pony subjects himself to the disfavour of the spirits. A pony with such marks will cause illness and even death to the children of the man who keeps it and a pony with the same marks over the thighs will cause the loss of property to the owner. A king and he alone can keep with immunity a pony with those star-like marks over the front legs; but not even a king can own without misfortune a pony with similar marks over the thigh. Thus a Shan if he finds himself in possession of an ill-marked animal will sell it to the first buyer at almost any price.

Traders have to exercise great care as regards their purchases. No person will readily buy the property of a demon-possessed person; for by the purchase for instance, of a finger-ring from such a person, the demons would be transferred to the purchaser through the medium of the ring.

Chinese traders when travelling through the jungles of Kengtung State, with large caravans of mules, have the custom of beating gongs while on the march. The sound of the gongs may have a quieting effect on the mules but the beating of the gongs is likely for the purpose of averting the influence of evil spirits.



7. HUNTING.

The word "Muhso" the other name by which the Lahu race is well known in Burma, means "Hunter" and it may be said that the name has been very appropriately conferred upon the Lahus, for there is nothing which they like better than to hunt all kinds of wild game, from the small and fleet barking deer to the big and ponderous bison. The Lahus know their jungle, they know thoroughly the habits and wiles of the wild game which they chase, they have both courage and patience and without blinking an eye they can take accurate and steady aim as they look across the shaft of their cross-bows or along the barrel of their primitive guns at the target which is to yield them some desired prize. It is somewhat surprising that peoples so skilled in the hunt as the Lahus undoubtedly are, should take cognizance of supernatural forces which they believe make their hunting expeditions successful. It would seem as if the Lahus attribute their craft and cunning as hunters, not so much to the rich heritage of hunting traditions and experience which has been passed on from one generation to another but rather are they inclined to think that their skill as hunters is due to or is aided by these mysterious spiritual powers in whose control all nature lies.

When Lahu hunters have the misfortune to hunt for protracted periods of time and never even get the sight of wild game, it is their custom to "Na ne Tave", which means to make offering to the spirit of the hunt. This particular spirit has influence over the hunter's gun and also over the animals of

the forest. "Na" means "gun", "Ne" is the word for spirit and "teve" means to do, used here in the sense of "making offering to". When the village Seer performs the "na ne teve" ceremony, he places on an offering tray, a gun, dah, hunter's bag and the jaws of some animal previously shot and also the flesh-chopping board and together with those implements one egg is offered. Some rice from a bamboo cup is scattered on the ground and the "Na Ne" is requested to come and eat. The Seer's request is addressed both to the spirits of wild animals and to the "Na Ne" as he prays thus:-

"Come, for the sulphur springs of our country are very sweet. Wild boar, male and female, barking deer, big horned deer come here and drink. The waters of other countries are very cold but here in our country there are hot springs. The waters of other countries are bitter but here the waters are sweet. Come and drink and when you come, come right under my trigger. The tiger long of tail and strong of body, cause him to be at the base of the mountain when I am at the top and when I am at the source of the river cause him to be at the river's mouth."

After this request the egg is taken and cracked open and its contents are placed in a cup. The "eye" of the egg is examined for signs, the eye being a circle large or small that forms in the yolk. If the circle is large that is an indication that they are presently to shoot large game but if the "eye" should be small, they may

expect to secure only wild fowl and smaller game. However, since the aid of the spirit has been invoked they feel confident that they will not return empty handed; but just before they start out, a little of the offered egg is rubbed on their guns.

A Lahu hunter tries to get possession of a gun that is really suited to him; for some Lahus have the habit of taking their guns with them every day, just as they take their tobacco pipes. To many of them a gun is not a luxury but a necessity.

If a Lahu when hunting should very frequently get sight of game, he says of his gun, "Na chi ngahta htuveyo", which means this gun is worthy of me or thoroughly suited to me and if he successfully shoots and kills wild game on every occasion he says of his gun, "Na chi manveyo". "Man" here means power, spiritual power. The Lahu thinks of his gun as possessed with a powerful spirit, which he further thinks of as "Na ne" or the gun spirit.

Lahu hunters have the custom of attaching or rubbing a portion of "the kill" on the part of the gun near to the striker. Here are rubbed and placed both blood and feathers which are offerings to the "Na ne" and these hunters say that if they did not make such offerings they would have no further success in the chase.

The Lahus fish in the rivers with large bell-shaped nets around the base of which are attached lead

sinkers. Before they set out on a fishing expedition they perform a simple ceremony which they call "Geu tanve" or offering of the net. On "Fowl Day" all the lead sinkers have been attached to the net except one. The chickens of the village are called and fed and while a large flock of the fowls are feeding, the fishing net is cast over them. From one of the netted birds a feather is plucked and it is placed in the hole of the one remaining lead sinker and is tied to the net. The Lahus believe as the result of the performance of this ceremony, they will make large catches of fish. It is also their custom to fish on big market days; for this is the time when large crowds of people congregate together in one place and they infer that fish have habits similar to men.

Lahus hunt in groups with the aid of beaters and dogs. The flesh of all large game is divided among the hunters and the members of the village who have remained at home also get their share. To the man who fired the first shot and drew the first blood of the beast, even if it were <sup>but</sup> so little, and not to the man who later shot and actually killed the animal goes the honour of dividing "the kill". The Lahus have very definite and strict rules as to the division of a "kill" and many bitter quarrels occur in their villages when those rules are not strictly adhered to. The hunter who draws the first blood, gets the whole of the side of the animal into which his bullet entered. He gets all of the head,

antlers included if the animal is a deer, the heart, half of the liver, the kidneys, six ribs, a fore-quarter and hind leg. These parts of the animal must not under any circumstances be given indiscriminately to others; and should he fail to observe the rules of distribution of the flesh, his reputation and good fortune as a hunter might be for ever lost, because the "Na ne" would depart from his gun.

Each family in a Lahu village must be given a portion, however small, of the animal's flesh. If a member of a family does not call to get his share it must be sent to him. To maintain the unity of the village in the bond of peace and love, it is obligatory for the hunter to give a share to every household and it is also compulsory for every member of the community to receive and eat a part of the flesh. Each of the "Beaters" gets an equal share and the man who actually shot and killed the animal gets one half of a hind-quarter from the portion of the flesh reserved by the "Bawshehhpa", the man who first shot and wounded the animal. If the bawshehhpa were the man who not only shot but who also killed the animal, (in such an event) the half of the hind-quarter, would be distributed equally among the gun-carriers. The men who track the wounded animal get two portions of the backbone meat and from the flesh reserved by the "Bawshehhpa" the village blacksmith receives the neck portion, which is his compensation for repairing the guns of the hunters. The rump of the animal must be given to the parents of the Bawshehhpa's wife and if her parents are not

living, her elder brother is the recipient. Should the Bawshehhpa fail in this obligation he is liable to be fined Rs.8/- (eight rupees) and if he should fail to pay the fine, his purposes will meet with defeat wherever he should go. To the Seer is given the breast meat; for it is he upon whom falls the responsibility of keeping the "Nane" in the gun of the hunter and when the hunter himself becomes ill the Seer sends forth his soul to discover what spirit the hunter has offended. The choice meat in the middle of the backbone goes to the village chief; for the headman of the community has to bear the burden of accidents which befall hunters in the jungle. The chief's two immediate helpers get a small share of the headman's portion. The hides of bear, small and large deer are the property of the "bawshehhpa" but the skins of all other animals, except the tiger, are divided and eaten. The Lahus make their own gunpowder and they shoot any kind of animal and any kind of bird.

The Kaws are not such reputed hunters as are the Lahus, nevertheless they are frequently to be seen with guns on the lonely jungle paths that lead to their rice fields and sometimes they go in groups on hunting expeditions.

It is the custom of Kaw hunters to make an offering to a tree near the village where reside the powers which have control over the wild game of the jungle.

It is regarded as a sacred tree and no one is allowed to chop it down nor to touch it with a dah. All offenders are promptly bitten by the powerful but invisible spirits which visitations result in illness to transgressors.

There are certain animals which a Kaw must never shoot; for the ancestors of the Kaw race entered into a covenant with them, the contracting parties of the covenant agreed not to harm each other. The following are the animals that a Kaw must never kill. Horn-bill, snake, python, bison and rhinoceros and also the elephant. They say that these creatures have "lawne", that is, spirits. There are animals which they never want to see in the daytime, such as the night-monkey, tiger, wild-cat and ground-rat and should they be seen it is necessary to exercise their spirits and make an offering, otherwise the person or persons who chanced to see any of them will become ill.

Kaws are forbidden to engage in the chase during the year in which a relative dies. They must await the opening of the new year before they can take part in a hunting expedition. They tell a story about a young man who went hunting shortly after the death of his father. He saw a black squirrel and shot at it, whereupon the squirrel spoke to the young man and asked him if he had come to shoot his father. This apparent belief in the transmigration of the soul is a prohibitive factor with

regard to the hunting practices of the Kaw people. Angered spirits of ancestors might cause the death of a hunter were he to shoot and kill the soul of some deceased relative.

When the Kaws secure game no member is allowed to eat of the meat until the man who shot the animal has first of all eaten the flesh together with his wife. Upon return from a hunting expedition the successful hunter must refrain from sexual intercourse with his wife for a period of seven days. Kaws have the curious custom of shooting at the moon during an eclipse and they say that if they do not fire their guns on such occasions, at some later and unexpected time their guns would burst and explode.

With reference to the hunting customs of the Kachins C. Gilhodes writes as follows:—"Before the hunt there is, as a rule, no sacrifice; but if they get no animal on the run whilst beating the forest, eggs and fowls are offered to the following Jathungs:

Bum Nu, spirit and guardian of the mountains.  
Hkang Shi, spirit of the foot-paths.  
Mali Nu, spirit of the forests.  
Shayit, spirit of salt water springs.

When the great spirits' good-will has been secured, hunting is continued. When any animal is shot, they at once, and on the spot, offer blood with leaves to Nshun Wa Masha and Ringnam Wa, who are supposed to help the hunters by closing the eyes and stopping the ears of the game. As they come home they offer seven pieces of meat to



Tsi Kanu Kientsi Marum Yangtsi Madum, who also favours the hunters and watches over the heads of game stuck on stakes before the house" \*

\* C. Gilhodes, "The Kachins, Religion & Mythology". p.59.

HATING-FIGHTING.

The ordinary petty quarrels between individuals in a village are usually easily and peacefully settled by the chief and elders but with regard to deep-rooted and bitter personal hatreds the counsel of chiefs and elders is frequently disregarded and the art of black magic is resorted to as a means of obtaining revenge. This practice of black magic is not performed except in circumstances where an individual feels and feels most keenly that he has been terribly wronged, perhaps by his having been beaten unjustly or fined unfairly. Maybe he has been grievously mistreated by some neighbouring villager and this serious injustice has roused his temper to a high pitch and he seeks by the aid of magic to revenge his enemy.

The Lahu name for black magic is "Ne Pi Pfuh Dave" and the way in which the practice is executed is somewhat as follows:- A three year old cock or a three year old male duck or a black cat is necessary for the ceremony. One of the three is chosen and is taken by the "Mawpa" (Seer) and the revengefully disposed man to some distant and lonely spot in the jungle. No other men accompany them; for their going is made in secret. The Seer is paid from twenty to thirty rupees for his important work; for his services are attended with possible risk and danger to himself, because of the evil spirits with which the "Mawpa" has to do are very capricious. All the required parts of the ritual are prepared by the magic worker. The Ama tree furnishes the wood from which he shapes sticks,

nine each with whittled ascending and descending fronds; spears, chisels and thorns nine each and a length of grass rope in which are fastened nine sharp pointed thorns, These implements the Lahus name "Pigo". While other preparations are being made, the three year old cock is tied to the "pigo" and kept in readiness for sacrifice. Buck wheat mixed with ashes is fried and placed in a cup and rice, curry and a hot liquid are also prepared and cooked. From a small tree trunk the "Mawpa" proceeds to make an image of the enemy who in this instance we will name "Ca La". Upon the completion of the image, the magic worker calls upon the soul of Ca La to come and the souls of Ca La's relatives are also invited. When the soul of the enemy and those of his friends arrive in the form of flies, ants, caterpillars and grasshoppers, to alight upon and crawl over the prepared food, a loaded gun is fired to shoot and to kill all of them.

In continuance of the complicated "Ne Pi Pfuh Dave" ceremony, the "Mawpa" takes two cups of rice water and the money which was given him for his services and offers both to the "Ne" or vicious spirit which he is about to address or command. In an act of reverence to the "Ne" he holds in his hand a lighted candle and he calls upon the "Ne" as the lord of the mountains and valleys thus:-

Ca La has done this man a great wrong and we  
want you, "Ne" to turn on him and take revenge.  
Do not let him go until he sickens and dies.  
Take this buck wheat, silver and gold, and as  
he sits by his fire in his house, let them fall

on him and if they fall on his hands let his hands fester and die; and if they fall on his feet, let them become corrupt and fall off. Lord of the sun and moon give help to me. Take these red and black spears, daks, knives and silver thorns and let them enter his nine-roomed house. Cause them to go to the fireplace; to his bed and to wherever he sits down and let them penetrate to every part of his house and whether he sleeps or awakes let these implements of destruction enter his intestines and lungs to do him hurt and to cause his death. Let all his bones be piled up in his house and until he dies do not let him go. Listen to the word of the Seer. Follow Ca La to the highland rice field and when hunting and the guns are fired let him be in the direct line of fire or when he climbs the mountain let the bears and tigers kill him or when he is fishing in the rivers let the water dragons bite him. Cause the tree under which he rests to fall down and crush him to death or cause him to be wounded by his axe, bow or gun and let much blood run down that his cup of death may be full. When he is dead do not come back yet. Follow his wife, children, relatives and villagers and keep after them until you see and meet them. Until the rock bears leaves; until the top of the mountain exchanges its

place with the base and until the source of the river exchanges its place with the river's mouth do not return. Neither must you follow the Seer. If you want to follow, pursue the "Kuipeujalahpa" bird.

It is now time to sacrifice the three year old cock. Part of its shed blood is sprinkled over the "Pigo" and then the blood stained "Pigo" is offered to the "Ne" at which time the "Mawpa" announces that the blood of Ca La has been spilt. The dead cock is carelessly thrown on the ground and in the position in which it falls if its head is turned in the direction of Ca La's village, that would be a sign of a calamity soon to overtake Ca La and his family. To secure additional signs, the bones of the cock are read. All the "Pigo" is thrown away and the cock is buried in the ground. The Seer and the now satiated villager return quietly to their homes to wait results. If afterwards an epidemic of illness and death should occur in Ca La's household and village and should Ca La find out that an enemy has been practising "Ne Pi Pfuh Dave" against him, he in turn will seek the aid of his "Mawpa" in retaliation. This is quite a common practice among the Lahus and since there seem to be many Lahus skilled in black magic their neighbours and especially the more civilised Shans are very much afraid of them. When a cat is used to perform black magic, the Seer sews up the eyes of the cat and he takes it near to the village where the enemy lives. Should the blind cat wander into the village that would be a sure indication that the enemy would soon sicken

and probably die.

I knew a Lahu man in the Mung Pawk district of Kengtung whose young daughter died very suddenly and he was convinced that "Ne Pi Pfuh Dave" was the cause of her death. He was on his way to the district official to report the case to him when he related to me his trouble. His enemy whom he accused of practising black magic lived in a nearby village and when this enemy was called before the official he admitted that he had practised "Ne Pi Pfuh Dave" but that he had done so because the father of the dead girl had been the aggressor and had in the first place employed the art of black magic against him.

Two Lahu brothers living in the Mung Hsat district but in separate villages had a law suit over a buffalo. During the course of the litigation the brothers developed an intense mutual hatred, with the result that they resorted to the Lahu custom of having their blood relationship annulled. This is accomplished by each of them paying to the chief of their district a sum of rupees thirty. In the presence of the chief and elders they covenant never again to call themselves brothers nor are they any longer to be regarded as such by either relatives or friends. They swear that they will never again visit each other nor will they again drink from the same stream. The ground of this witness is bought by the two men for four rupees which sum is paid to the chief of the district.

During the past history of the Lahu people, they have as a race engaged in frequent warfare with the Chinese and the Lahu traditions proudly point to the times when they bravely

engaged the better equipped Chinese in battle. The chiefs of villages and the Seers are the persons in whose hands any decision with regard to war rests. The chiefs take counsel together and the Seers resort to divination and if all indications are favourable war is resorted to. The cause for war might be the murder of some Lahus by Chinese or the destruction of Lahu opium crops by Chinese officials. The allied fighting chiefs draw up a form of covenant in which they agree not to prove traitorous to each other during the period of fighting. Either upon a piece of white cloth or upon a log of wood, they make some inscriptions with a stick of charcoal. The cloth or wood is afterwards burned in the fire and the ashes are collected and placed in a cup and mixed with blood and the mixture is drunken by every member of the covenant. It is a stipulation of such agreements that all forms of treachery are punishable by death and these solemn contracts are executed with regard to the spirits which they fear.

Under the preceding chapter on hunting we observed that the hunter was careful and concerned as to whether the "Ne" was with his gun; for the absence or presence of the "Ne" determined either his failure or success as a hunter. As a man of war he desires to be doubly sure that his gun is "man ve yo". The Lahus have also depended upon charms for their success in battle. Certain stones, especially if they resemble fish, birds, birds' eggs, bracelets, hoe and knife, have the power to prevent the guns of the enemy from exploding and should the guns shoot all right the bullets would have no penetrative power. Bits of

cloth stained with menstrual blood and hair from the procreative organs of both sexes are rammed into their guns and into the wooden handles of their swords to impart to their weapons death dealing powers.

The Lahu traditions point to a time when as a race they were in possession of a precious stone in the form of a seal. So long as the stone remained in their possession it was impossible for their enemies to conquer them but when fighting with the Chinese they lost the stone and with it departed the power and glory of the Lahu people.

It has been the custom of the Lahus to mutilate badly the bodies of the enemy. Upon the conclusion of warfare and upon the return of the fighting forces to their villages, it was the custom of the Lahus to sacrifice fowls and to call back from the battle fields the souls of the returned soldiers.

Just about three years ago there was a battle between Lahus and the Indian army in the district of Mung Hsat. The primitive Lahu warriors were under the command of "Maheh G'uisha" and the modern trained Government forces were under the command of an English officer, Captain Dunn, who for the successful completion of the campaign received the King's Police Medal. Here was an instance of magic versus science when the forces of the latter completely routed the boasted powers of magic. Maheh G'uisha was a Lahu leader who was claiming for himself divine attributes as his name would suggest, "G'uisha" being the Lahu name for their Supreme Being. As a religious teacher of animism he claimed for himself miraculous healing powers, so that Lahus



and other races from far and near made pilgrimages to his village to be cured of leprosy, opium smoking and other afflictions. While he was still a humble Lahu prophet I visited him and inquired why he was building so many hut-  
temples. He told me that those were for the worship of "G'uisha" and when he mentioned that name he pointed to the heavens indicating the abode of "G'uisha". So long as he confined his teaching to religion, Government did not in any way interfere with Maheh; but when he became a menace to the community and was planning the capture of the entire Mung Hsat District it became necessary for Government to intervene. He had fortified his village with a very strongly constructed fort, into which he and his followers thought no opposing enemy would be able to enter. Maheh had long taught his disciples to believe that the sticks of bamboo fence which surrounded his compound, in case of attack, would jump out of the ground and become spears to beat back and kill any and all enemies. By charms and with the aid of the "Ne" in which they trusted, their bodies, they believed, were invulnerable to modern bullets. So completely did they trust their charms was evident on one of the days of the conflict when three of the Lahus stood on top of the fort and defied modern weapons to shoot them down. However, they discovered to their utter horror and dismay that their charms and magic failed to convert British bullets into wax. When the Lahu fort was eventually stormed, it was found that three brave Lahus had held up for an hour the attacking force of fifty sepoy who were equipped with modern means of

warfare. The courageous action of the three men permitted their leader Maheh and all others within the fort to escape in the adjacent jungle.

With regard to personal hatred and racial warfare, the Kaw people have similar customs and practices to those of the Lahus; but the Kaws are regarded as not being so skilled as their hill dwelling neighbours in the use of black magic. Before the Kaw people engaged in battle it was their custom to make offering to the "Myicha Ne"; for their success in war largely depended upon supernatural aid. They took with them into the battle field the "Ahpe Paw Law" which is part of the "Myicha Ne". The Kaw word for ancestors is "Ahpo Ahpi" and so the "Ahpe Paw Law" is the residence of the deified and powerful souls of their ancestors, whose protective influence is believed to guard the warriors against wounds from guns and swords. Good charms in the form of stones are also a part of the equipment of fighting men; for those stones have the power to turn the bullets of the enemy into liquid and thus render them harmless. The chiefs and leaders of battle have magical powers to conceal their men from the eyes of the enemy; for by the aid of those strong charms, hiding soldiers can lie down on top of the leaves of wild banana trees and thus suspended in the air, are supported and hidden by them. The streams from which the enemy is likely to drink are magically blown upon and poisoned. The Kaw traditions tell us that it has not been the custom for Kaws to fast before or during warfare but on the other hand the only food which the fighting men ate was bread

made from rice flour. The bread was shaped like a helmet and was worn on the head and by confining themselves to this simple form of diet they gained an advantage over their more indulgent enemies who took time to cook their meals.

The Kachins resort to the same methods in the employment of black magic with the object of obtaining revenge on a personal enemy. As a race the Kachins are a militant people but they are resident in Kengtung State in such small numbers that we have not had occasion to see their fighting qualities. However, in the real Burma home of the Kachins when their country was being brought into subjection by Government, about fifty years ago, the British forces discovered that they were engaged with a stubborn and brave fighting race. Every possible natural resource has been employed by the Kachins while fighting their enemies. Before their migration into Burma they doubtless had many an encounter with the more numerous Chinese. The building of stockades; the creation of pit falls and the blocking of roads by their felling trees have been some of the means usually employed. Shot guns, dahs, bows, and spears are their fighting implements and like the Lahus and Kaws, they make their own gunpowder. "Before a raid the tumsa is called upon to decide by his magic which of the villagers are to go and who are to stay at home. When the tumsa has selected the party the mi-twe is consulted as to the road to be taken and the time for assault. Heads are cut off as a proof that the warrior has killed his man. When he has established this fact among his fellow-villagers the head is thrown away. The Kachin does not consider, like the Wa, that

by securing the head he has secured the ghost of the departed as his minister and servant; nor does he think, like the Chinaman, that the appearance in the next world without a head will be to his advantage. The cutting off of the head is therefore with the Kachins neither an act of religion nor of spite, It is mere vanity. When the raid is ended the village tumsa again presides over a general worshipping of the nats, exultant or reproachful, according to the issue. Alliances between the Chiefs of different clans are commonly cemented by marriage. In the ceremonial making of friendship a buffalo is slaughtered, its blood mixed with native spirits and spears and swords are dipped in this. Then each chief drinks, calls upon the nats to witness and imprecates dire calamities upon himself if he should break his vow: that he may be swallowed by tigers or bitten by nats or may perish by his own dah. Weapons, dahs, guns and spears are often exchanged and it is customary for each to sacrifice to the household deities of the other." \*

\* Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States, page 430, Vol. I.

JUDGING.

The various tribes of Kengtung State, though they still retain many of their ancient and primitive customs, yet they are the subjects of the Sawbwa and live within his jurisdiction and must refer and bring all their serious and important cases of litigation to the Shan courts for judgment. However, even in these modern times, the village chiefs and their immediate helpers rule their own villages and when it is to their own advantage the villagers are glad to accept the judgments of their chiefs rather than go to the higher Shan tribunals; but if the village chiefs should make unfair decisions, the villagers if they are sufficiently courageous, will refer their cases to the Shan rulers.

A Lahu blacksmith told me of a case, concerning the settlement of which he had played a part. A buffalo had been stabbed with a dah and had died and the village to which the buffalo belonged accused the members of a neighbouring village of the spiteful deed; but as no one had witnessed the stabbing of the buffalo, it was exceedingly difficult to pass judgment. The Lahu chiefs of the district, because of the lack of sufficient evidence, allowed the case to be settled according to an old and primitive animistic custom of the Lahus, called "cahka hkove" which literally translated means "rice chewing". In this ceremony the "Mawpa" has a part, for he has to call the "Ne" to come and bear witness in the presence of the contestants and on this occasion he is paid for his services. He addresses the "Ne"

and says that our finite wisdom is not able to decide who is in the right. Come to our aid and show us who is the guilty party. The appellant and defendant is each given four annas weight of rice to chew; but before the two men put the rice in their mouths they agree in the presence of the elders that the guilty person is the one who fails while chewing to mix the raw rice with saliva and that the righteous person in this instance, is the man who succeeds in thoroughly soaking the rice with saliva. This case was observed by the Lahu blacksmith and he told me that the man who lost the case and who was judged to be the guilty person, took from his mouth, after the prescribed chewing period was over, rice that was quite dry and red in colour and the person who won the case and who was judged to be guiltless, took from his mouth rice that was thoroughly liquified. The Lahus believe that the "Ne" controls the jaws of the guilty person and prevents the flow of the saliva.

When property has been stolen in the village and the thief is not known, the Lahus have two methods of discovering the thief. Water is poured into a large cup and each member of the community is given a stem of grass. The dish containing the water is lifted and presented in an act of acknowledgement to the "Ne" after which an egg is cracked open and its contents put into the water cup. The villagers then place their straws into the mixture and later take them out. The straw to which the white of the egg is attached when it is taken out of the cup is observed and the owner of that straw is judged to be the thief.

The second method is a little more complicated. The Lahus make a human image with a large basket, which they dress in a man's clothing. The heart of this image is represented by a small telescopic bamboo woven box which on ordinary occasions is used as a rice container or tobacco pouch. Into this heart-box or "Kaho" are put two flint stones and two other stones. The soul or spirit of a star is called and together with a cup of water and chop sticks all are poured into the "Kaho" and thus the heart of the image is complete and to the entire image a name is given. They speak to the idol and say that property has been lost in the village and they do not know who has taken it. Teach us who the thief is or lead us to the place where the stolen goods are concealed. After this address they lift up the image and hold it firmly, while the idol seems of its own volition to move directly towards the thief or to the spot where the stolen goods are. When the image has done its work, the spirit or soul of the star is requested to return to its abode.

If a Lahu man in his own community steals a cow he is compelled to restore two cows to the owner; but should he steal an animal in a stranger's territory, he would have to compensate the owner of the stolen beast with three animals. On the lonely borders of the state where thorough supervision is not always possible, villagers take the law into their own hands and shoot and kill horse and cattle thieves wherever they overtake them.

According to old Lahu laws murder was punishable by death and the relatives of the murderer were responsible for the payment of a sum of money — the price of shedding innocent

blood — to the family of the deceased. It would seem that adultery was severely punished, even to death, especially in cases of rape; but at the present time immorality in Lahu communities is controlled by the imposition of fines upon the guilty. Fines of money, both small and large are imposed according to the gravity of the case.

The division of the inheritance is a frequent cause of trouble in a Lahu community but if the Lahu "Awli" or custom was always strictly adhered to, there would be less litigation amongst them. When both parents die leaving a number of small children, the male members of the family must go to live with the immediate relatives of the deceased father, and the girls are claimed by the relations of the deceased mother. Male and female members of the family get an equal share of the inheritance as for example, if the deceased person's property should consist of a gun valued at fifteen rupees and a cow worth twenty rupees, the gun would go to the son and the cow to the daughter. However, the girl would have to give to her brother five rupees because a cow is regarded as property with possibilities of increase.

When litigants appear before a Lahu chief they bring with them little packages of tea and tobacco which are wrapped in leaves. While presenting their case to the Headman they set down before him the tea and the tobacco and after he has listened to their accounts of trouble, if he decides to try their case, he takes a little of the presented tea, boils and drinks it. Trials are frequently conducted in an atmosphere of great excitement and



disorder. The contestants remain seated on the floor in the presence of the chief and while the latter maintains his dignity the litigants shout loudly and hurl accusations at each other and finally when the shouting dies away, the Headman after a patient listening to the arguments of the respective parties, pronounces his judgment.

In Kaw villages three officials are appointed for the judicature. The "Haca" is the village chief and he is looked upon as the chief justice; the "Na Ngui" is the second in rank and it is his business to hear the cases of contestants before they appear in the "Haca's" tribunal and the third in rank is the "Pu Lam" who is really the village steward whose duty it is to collect and provide food for all officials and visitors to the court of the "Haca".

Breaches of social and religious customs, theft, accidental destruction of crops by straying animals and divorce are examples of the type of cases for trial that come before the Haca's court.

If two persons marry in defiance of and contrary to Kaw custom such people are not allowed to remain in the village unless they make reparation by the payment of a very heavy fine, and should they refuse to pay the fine they are driven from the village to find a home wherever they can. No person can be allowed to live in a Kaw village who has not regard for the "Myicha Ne". The law permits a Kaw to have a second wife but no Kaw woman may be the wife of two husbands. He is not permitted to marry two wives on one and the same day and at the time he

takes a second wife, he has to pay the parents of his first wife forty-seven rupees and eight annas which is said to be for the purpose of washing away the shame from the parents' faces. In Lahu language this ceremony is called "meh suhve" which literally translated means "to wash the face."

With regard to marriage laws Kaw men are prohibited from taking in wedlock first cousins, aunts and <sup>? or both sides</sup> neices. Formerly, when such blood relations did marry, it was the custom of the Kaws to bury them alive in a freshly dug hole by the roadside. They were buried in a standing position and their heads only appeared above ground and in this abandoned condition they suffered a gradual death.

Divorce while it is discouraged is easily enough obtained. If a man desires to put away his wife he may do so by the payment of the small sum of rupees four but if the divorced wife has one child, the husband has to pay her rupees eight plus rupees six, the latter amount being regarded as her price for suckling the child. Should there be two children in the family the separated woman receives rupees eleven plus another six. When a wife deserts her husband and runs away from home, she has to pay him rupees three and twelve annas. In all cases of divorce the children go with the father but as regards property the pursuant in the case receives no share of it. We have already noted with reference to the marriage of a widowed woman that the laws of the community compel her to surrender her children to the parents or male relatives of her deceased husband. This custom has very definite relation to the "Myicha Ne". A Kaw woman capable of child-

bearing is not allowed to offer to the "Myicha Ne"; for her touch would be defiling. Women when they marry come indirectly under the protective influence of the "Myicha Ne" of the respective families with which they identify themselves through the marriage bond. Children must always be related to the father's family line and to the "Myicha Ne" of that particular household. Divorced women and widows who re-marry definitely break their former family bonds and in all cases the separation is most decisive. Were the children of such mothers to accompany them into the new relationships, they would by so doing place their lives outside the protective sphere of the "Myicha Ne".

Fines are imposed by the Chief upon all members of the community who show disregard for both social and religious customs. In a village in French-Indo-China where our party camped for the night, the loud and bitter crying of a Kaw woman disturbed the peace of the community. When we made inquiry concerning her, the villagers told us that the woman who was a widow had gone without the permission of the village chief to visit in a neighbouring village for several days. She had just returned and for her disregard of a village custom, the chief had confiscated her one and only pig as a penalty. Probably the pig was killed the following day and part of its flesh was offered to the "Myicha Ne". On holy days when all visitors are prohibited from entering a Kaw community, signs are posted at the entrances of the villages as warnings. Kaws are greatly distressed when strangers carelessly disrespect their sacred occasions and exact fines from all transgressors for the reason that they are under necessity to

make additional offering and sacrifice to the spirits which have been offended.

Similar laws to those above cited exist among the Kachins. A young Kachin man when he puts away his wife loses a sum of money which he paid for his bride and he also has to give a buffalo which is killed and feasted upon by the villagers, after part of its flesh has been offered to the spirits. When the wife divorces her husband she has to refund to him the marriage price, as well as make an offering of a buffalo to the spirits. C. Gilhodes says, "The punishments which follow adultery are enormous considering the poverty of the Kachins and reduce to rapid destitution, the family of the guilty man, but the fear they inspire safeguards a little the good morals, about which the spirits do not bother, and which the people do not naturally seem to hold in high esteem, but observe only by compulsion."\*

With regard to ordeals of judgment Mr. George writes the following: "Accuser and accused have to stake something. The value of the stake depends on the gravity of the crime alleged. The stakes are held by a referee, who wraps some rice in a leaf and boils it. If the rice boils regularly and becomes soft all through, the accused is declared innocent and takes the stakes; if not, the accuser wins.

"In serious cases between Duwas and men of means the stakes may be several buffaloes, guns or a slave or two and then

\* C. Gilhodes "The Kachins Rel. & Myth." p. 224

another form of ordeal is customary. A tumsa is summoned and goes to the jungle with his dah. After invocation he casts this from him at random. The dah, which has become endued with supernatural power, hits a bamboo which, when it is cut open, is found to contain about a cup full of water. The water is put in a large pot over a fire and when it boils the accused has to put his hand into it. If he is guilty, the water froths up, bubbles over, and takes the skin off the man's hand. If he is innocent, he suffers no hurt." \*

In all these primitive ordeals there seems to be present in those who are responsible for the execution of justice a sense of dependence upon supernatural forces which powers are regarded as capable of rendering fitting judgments.

\* Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States, p. 427.

DIVINATION.

The method most frequently used by the Lahus in foretelling future events is by reading chicken bones. The upper leg joints of sacrificed fowls are always preserved in pairs and certain signs are requested to be present in the bones before the bird is offered. When divining the Seer holds the pair of bones together in his hand in a position that is parallel to the front of his body. The inner bone is called the "Yehshehpa" and the outer one "Keh chaw". The former word means "Householder" and the latter, "Guest". Each of those two corresponding bones normally has two small but almost invisible holes into which the diviner places tiny sharpened wooden pins or sticks. As there are variations in the shape and size of the perforations, the sign-revealing-pins of one set when in fixed position may and do lie at entirely different angles and thereby give different signs than do the fixed indicators of another pair. From the direction to which the sticks incline and also from the measure of firmness or lack of it with which the pins fit into the perforations the diviner foretells what is likely to happen to those who are seeking the message of the bones. When the indicators spread outwards in regular form, like the extended wings of a bird that is a good sign which foretells happy and frequent meetings with friends and relatives. In all instances where the tokens are favourable the pins fit firmly into the holes but in cases where the indicators are wabbly and lack foundation, there is occasion to

fear future events.

In certain pairs, the "Yehshehhpa" bone may have just one hole but its partner, the "Keh chaw" has its normal two. This condition would be regarded as a bad sign for the householder, an omen to him that his wife is soon to die. However, should the man in question not happen to have a wife the sign would have no significance to him. When only one hole is present in the "Keh chaw" that would be interpreted as a sign to the visiting guest that his wife in some distant village is in immediate danger of death. In another pair there may be three perforations in the "Keh chaw" and two of these three holes are opposite to each other cross-wise of the bone and at the same time there are the two normal openings in the "Yehshehhpa". This three-holed type is called "Betu" and is regarded as "Ma da", not good. It is a sign that the village will have to be repeatedly feasted and that the occasion of the frequent feasting or "Bon teve" is unceasing illness in the family. Still another pair is called the "Lawte". In the "Lawte" there occur three perforations in one of the two partner bones and two of the holes are close to one another lengthwise of the joint. The signs of the Lawte are also feared and considered "Ma da"; for the Lawte is "Ne ca dave", joined or related to the evil spirits.

Divination by the reading of fowl bones is connected with every serious activity and event of a Lahu man's life. For the purpose of foretelling future events the Lahus also read the skull of the fowl and its tongue. When the head is examined it is considered a good omen if the middle inside part is

perfectly clear and transparent. It is still a good sign if in the centre of the skull there is a black streak running lengthwise and straight; but should the dark line be lying crosswise that would be considered a bad omen and an indication that the sick person would surely die. In the presence of this latter token all attempts to secure the healing and recovery of the patient are considered useless. The appearance of circles in the skull are regarded as a sign to prepare the tables for a feast, "Bon teve", by which means health is obtained for the weak.

Yet another way of divination is to read the tongue of the fowl. With the beak of the bird facing towards the diviner, he determines that the part of the mouth left of the tongue is the "Ne hpaw" or evil spirit's side and that the side to the right is "Chaw hpaw" or man's side. If the tongue lies to the left and backwards that is a sign that the "Ne" has departed; but if the "Ne" is still lingering in the vicinity, the tongue will be seen to the left and forward. When the tongue turns backwards and lies exactly in the middle that is a sign that the "Ne" has not yet been exorcised and that the patient is sure to die; but if it is placed in a central and forward position, the omen is good. It is also a favourable token if it is on the right side and to the front; but if it is turned back and to the right there is occasion for fear.

Elsewhere in this thesis we have already indicated how the Lahus resort to divination when choosing a house site; when seeking vengeance upon a personal enemy; before and during hunting expeditions; when attempting to establish either innocence or guilt



and when engaged in the detection of thieves. The articles used in foretelling future events are eggs, fowls, chicken bones, rice, black cats and human images. A few other methods are perhaps worthy of mention.

The "Mawpa" or Seer is the person who usually does the divining and part of his equipment is a strip of cloth and lacking that he may use his turban. It is the business or responsibility of the "Mawpa" to discover which spirit the sick person has offended and in the discharge of his sacred duties he uses a length of cloth as a standard of measure. After he has passed his measuring hand over the cloth and has ascertained and has carefully marked, say, three span's length, he offers a request or prayer to this effect:-

If this sick person has offended the "Ika Ne"  
 -water spirit- let my second measurement of the  
 cloth exceed the mark of the three span's length;  
 but if he has not transgressed the water spirit  
 let the second spanning correspond exactly with  
 the original mark.

If the second measurement is exactly the same as the first it is evident that the patient has not offended the "Ika Ne"; but since his illness is the evidence that some spirit has been transgressed, the "Mawpa" continues to span his cloth until the malicious and angry spirit is discovered. Needless to say that this process of divining is carried out in an atmosphere of seriousness and with a sense of dependence upon supernatural aid.

Lahus choose their grave sites by means of an egg-throwing ceremony. The spot on which a raw egg lands and cracks open is judged to be a good and proper site. Frequent and repeated visitations of a tiger to a Lahu village during which raids domestic animals and sometimes persons are bitten and killed, are regarded as a sign that some grave immorality has been secretly committed in the community.

The Kaws of all Kengtung peoples are considered to be the most superstitious. There are two birds the "Jiga jiyeu" and the "Dehmjuh chiya" which if the Kaws hear or see flying over their village are looked upon with foreboding; for the persons who may chance to witness their flight think that some form of illness will soon overtake members of the community. When Kaws are on their way to make an offering to the spirit of the rice field, if they should happen upon a snake crossing their path that would be a sign to them not to expect a plentiful harvest. We have previously observed concerning the Kaws that they will speedily abandon a tract of land on which they may have spent days of labour if upon the site they should chance to see in the day time, a species of monkey that normally sleeps during the day and which habitually goes about in the night time only. In connection with housebuilding we have already remarked that the Kaws read the liver of a pig to determine if the omen is good or bad and we have also noted that the eyes of a fowl are examined for signs, before long journeys are undertaken. To discover thieves and to secure the recovery of stolen goods the

Kaws employ the services of the neighbouring HkaHpfeh people whose method of divination for the detection of thieves is as follows:-Each family of the community wraps in a package a small quantity of raw rice and care is taken to give each parcel a distinctive mark. When this is done all the bundles are placed in a large pot to boil and after boiling the contents are examined. If among the many packages there is one bundle in which the rice remains in a raw condition, the owner of that parcel is named the thief.

Upon the Puban-the "Repairer of the Gate"-rests the responsibility for the choice of a new village site. The Kaw Puban uses the very same means as the Lahus do when selecting a location. He takes an egg and speaks somewhat to this effect: "If this site is a good place for us on which to build a village let this egg which I throw, crack open, but if it is an unsuitable locality prevent the egg from cracking."

The Kaw priest determines which evil spirit is the cause of any illness by his examination of the manner in which rice seeds fall and lie on the ground when scattered by his own hand. The Seer can tell whether or not the departed soul of her patient (the Kaw Seer is a woman) has returned by discerning the signs which the contents of an uncooked egg reveal. These peoples are always looking for signs. To both Lahus and Kaws a comet is an indication of approaching war.

By consultation with the spirits, the Kachin Seer is able to tell which animals and how many are suited for sacrifice.

He takes a joint of bamboo and holds it over the fire until it bursts and explodes. Thereupon he makes examination of the burnt embers and from those he determines which animals should be sacrificed and the number which must be offered. His supernaturally revealed pronouncements under all circumstances must be obeyed. If a buffalo has a star-like mark on its hide that is a good indication that it is suited for sacrifice but, on the other hand if an animal chosen for offering should be found to have markings that suggest an "X" or a cross, that is a certain token that the sick person will die and that it is of little use to do anything to secure his recovery.

C. Gilhodes writes the following with reference to Kachin divination:—"In the sacrifices it is the custom to examine the milk(sinla) of pigs and the head(baung) and the bones of the wings(singkong) and legs(lasen) of fowls to know whether the sacrifices have been agreeable to the Nat, and also to know the wishes of the other spirits, and the future, for instance, to guess whether your rice crop will be plentiful.-----The mythoi takes a root of ginger(shanam), cuts slices of it which he drops on the ground, and predicts according to the marks made on the surface of the part which he keeps in his hand. The mythoi rolls up in a horn-shaped fashion, a plantain leaf(laphau), blows into it, opens it and speaks according to the signs-----inside."\*

\*C. Gilhodes The Kachins Rel. & Myth. p. 120.

AILING.

While an animist seems to believe that evil spirits are the cause of most all forms of illness and disease, nevertheless there are occasions when he thinks and declares that certain kinds of sickness and death are due to perfectly natural causes. Primitive man is not wholly destitute of reason. On the contrary as the result of his stern conflict with nature, he has developed reasoning powers which have enabled him to adapt himself, with a great measure of success, to his immediate environment.

An expression frequently heard among the Lahus. is, "ca yave" which means to eat the wrong kind of food. A child that is ill from having eaten some poisonous jungle fruit has "ca yave" and in the case of a mother who fails to make a normal recovery of strength after child-birth, the cause of her prolonged weak physical condition is sometimes ascribed to her carelessness of diet, "ca yave". And quite naturally an elder dies because he is "Maw peu", completed in age.

While it is a fact that Lahus and other animistic tribes of Burma do on certain occasions point to perfectly natural causes of illness, on the other hand it is their more common belief and general custom to ascribe the cause of their ailments to the influence of malicious and evil spirits. These demons are as numerous as the many and varied diseases which afflict both man and beast. We shall now attempt to show how different kinds of spirits are related to specific types of illness and while doing so we shall give the Lahu names and the English equivalents of many of these spirits and later we shall also

make a general classification of them.

A. Mvuh Taw Myuh Hteh Ne or The Thunder and Lightning Spirit.

This demon is closely related to the spirit of iron and copper, which the Lahus call Sho Ne and Kui Ne and the home of all three is believed to be at Peking, China. When a Lahu is afflicted with eye disease, swelling of hands and feet and a scurvy itching body this complication of ailments is caused by the Lightning spirit.

B. Aha Ne. There is really no English equivalent for this one; but as there are three different kinds of Aha Ne, in the treatment of the three types the meaning will be manifest.

a. Aha-Vahan Ne. This is the spirit that dwells in abandoned Buddhist temples and when this malicious demon bites a person, (it should be said here that Lahu animists always refer to the spirits as "biting" spirits, "Ne cheve") he becomes unconscious and is neither able to speak nor sleep. I have had several personal experiences with Shan men in relation to this Aha Vahan Ne that are perhaps worth recording in order to further illustrate the animistic types of mind and feeling. During a tour I came across a small Buddhist temple which had just been abandoned; for the Shans of the district had given up the entire village site, including their place of worship because the evil spirits in that locality had been too antagonistic to the community. Inside the deserted temple were a number of little Buddha images and I asked the Shan villagers if they had any objection to my taking one. They very readily consented to my taking as many as I wanted;

because they themselves would not dare to touch anything that was related to a Aha Vahan Ne.

In the large Shan town of Mung Yang I was engaged with some Shans in the measurement of a site for a mission compound. In the midst of the measured area was an ancient brick ruin of a Buddhist temple, which the Shans call Vahan Ne and which for them is "Tabu". Since I knew that under no circumstances would they make use of the hundreds of bricks long since abandoned I asked them if they would give us permission to use them when we built our school building. There and then they told me that we could have all we desired.

Under the chapter on "travelling" I have already made mention of the Vahan Ne in the Mung Lom plain of Yunnan in China in which place the old Shan man did not care to have us camp for the night because he thought the evil spirits of the place would bite us and make us ill. When I asked him what kind of sickness the spirits caused he described to me what are the usual symptoms of malaria which is a common every day illness of all plain dwellers of Kengtung State and its borders.

The Aha Vahan Ne seem to be the ghosts of the departed dead which either reside in or hover about the vicinity of abandoned places, once regarded as sacred and which were used for purpose of worship.

b. Aha Mawn Ne. This form of Aha dwells in trees and mountains and afflicts a person with illness the chief symptoms of which are eyes which turn white and stare vacantly; confused speech and inability either to eat or drink.

c. Aha Hkaw Ne or Aha Mountain spirit. This third type is similar to the second but it is regarded as the demon which causes severe nose bleed, which it is impossible to cure by medication.

C. Suh Sheh Ne or Whirlwind Spirit. Headache and giddiness are caused by the demon of the whirlwind. A Lahu under the influence of the Suh Sheh Ne when he looks at any object, his house for instance, thinks he sees it falling or when he looks at a tree he has a sensation that it is falling upon him.

D. Suh Sheh Paw Ne. This whirlwind spirit is similar to "C" but it is believed to be the cause of an illness that is akin to epilepsy. Both kinds of Suh Sheh Ne reside under the earth and come out of a hole of the ground to trouble man. When the Seer commands the Suh Sheh Ne he orders it to return to its hole in the ground.

E. Paw Ne Ha Paw Ne or the Spirit that causes Epilepsy.

F. Mvuhnyi Hapa Ne- The Spirit of Sun and Moon. When troubled by this spirit the patient has severe pains in his forehead and the crown of his head and he is sufficiently ill to require the services of the Seer who offers to the spirit of the sun and moon to secure his healing.

G. Alamehshijaw Ne- The Spirit of the Rainbow.

Sometimes a Lahu man has fever, loss of appetite, a decided jaundiced complexion and abdominal swelling. When such a patient presents himself to the Seer, he may be told that he has offended the spirit of the rainbow. This demon is not regarded as particularly vicious, so a large offering is not necessary. By a lake



side or pond two bamboos are prepared and bent to represent rainbows. White and red cloth are twisted around one arch of bamboo and red and green cloth around the other. Rice mixed with salt and the turban of the sick man are taken by the Seer to the place of offering and when the ceremony is over the turban is returned to the patient and he is expected to recover.

H. Peu Fu- The Spirit of Meteors or Heavenly Bodies.

This demon is sometimes named "Hehpa Ne". "Hehpa" is the Lahu name for Chinese. The Peu Fu is believed by the Lahus to be under the exclusive control of certain Chinamen who rear or have intimate relationship with it. This meteor spirit is feared especially by persons with open and festering sores for it is through these wounds the Peu Fu gains an entrance to the body. The patient knows that he has been attacked by this blood thirsty spirit; for he observes that his open sore has been licked clean of all its festering matter and at the same time he experiences a hot and burning sensation in his stomach and his arms become enlarged by swelling. Previous to an attack, the colour of the Peu Fu as it makes its flight across the sky is observed to be white; but on its return journey after it has sucked the blood of its victim its colour is red. The treatment of Peu Fu attacked patients we will consider under the chapter on healing.

I. Peu Taw Peu Keh Ne- The Spirit of The Morning and  
The Evening Star.

In the morning between the hours of six and nine o'clock a Lahu suffering from a headache, has probably been bitten by the Peu Taw Peu Keh Ne which demon is driven away or killed by

means of an arrow shooting ceremony. An arrow around which has been twisted yellow, red, white and black threads and the point of which has been tipped with black wax is held above the patient's head. The weapon pierces a piece of paper as it is sent in the direction of the *Peu Taw Ne*.

J. *Mvuh Fi Myi Fi Ne*.

This demon dwells in grassless waste places and upon sites which are ponds and small lakes during the rainy season the waters of which quickly evaporate and disappear when the hot season begins. The Lahu word "Fi" means to evaporate. Rheumatic pains in the limb joints, partial paralysis, and epilepsy may afflict a person who is bitten by the *Mvuh Fi Myi Fi Ne*.

K. *Ha Ne*- The Rock Spirit.

The *Ha Ne* dwells in rocks and stones both large and small.

When offering is made to this demon, the ceremony is carried out at the base of some huge rock boulder. The *Ha Ne* is the spirit that inflicts people with madness.

L. *Ika Law Ne*.- The Spirit of Rivers.

This spirit if transgressed may cause the death by drowning. In less ferocious mood, the *Ika Law Ne*, just bites and afflicts with trivial pains the careless fisherman or traveller. A Lahu chief once complained to me that he had a backache and he was afraid that his affliction might be due to his having offended in some unknown way, the spirit of the river in which he had been fishing all day. Akin to the River Spirits are the demons of lakes and wells.

M. Hkaw Ne.- The Mountain Spirit.

Last year there died in Kengtung State a splendid young British official, Lieut. Cadell of the Survey of India. His work for Government took him into some of the most rugged country and highest mountains of the Kengtung State. While camped on a mountain top he contracted pneumonia from which he died after a few days illness. The Lahus of the district believed that he was bitten of the spirit of the mountain and since there is no medicine which can cure the disease which the Hkaw Ne inflicts, to secure the healing of the patient, it is necessary to make offering to the angry demon. The Lahus say that if sacrifice had been made to the mountain spirit, Lieut. Cadell would surely not have died.

N. But the name of Lahu spirits is legion. In addition to the above there are two kinds of Mvuhmyi Ne-Land Spirits which cause a dropsical disease; Ma Ne-Battle spirit held responsible for severe surface pains in the abdominal region; Peu Ne which attacks the stomach of person who may have chanced to speak with a woman to whom many children have been born and all of whom are dead; Chawmaw Ne-Spirits of Old Men, two kinds: Living elders' spirits and ancestors' spirits, both of which though not considered malicious and capricious in nature are especially responsible for illness amongst children; Na Ne-Gun spirit upon which the hunter and warrior are dependent for success; Hke Ne and Yeh Ne-Village and House spirits respectively which are protective and guardian demons but also capricious; Heh Ne- the spirit of the rice field whose favour insures a good harvest and

Ava Ne- the spirit of the Wa tribe. This demon believed to be the special possession of the Was afflicts persons with sudden and unexpected illness.

There remain to be mentioned the names of most feared demons which are the Meh Ne Gu Ne- the Spirits of Fatal accidents; Jaw Ne, which causes a lingering form of illness; the "Taw" which is a blood sucking and decayed flesh eating demon and lastly the spirit of Demon Possession.

O. Meh Ne Gu Ne - The Spirits of Fatal Accidents.

Men who are killed by falling trees, by a tiger trap, by snake bite and men who are accidentally shot while hunting or who are fatally wounded by sword or spear; murdered and drowned persons; women who die in child-birth and those who have the misfortune to be mauled by a bear or bitten to death by a tiger, all these people who die suddenly and accidentally are believed to be the victims of the Meh Ne Gu Ne, and in order that the remaining relatives and friends might not be similarly afflicted it is necessary to make sacrifice to those evil and greatly feared spirits.

P. Jaw Ne.

This demon is believed to be the cause of protracted and lingering forms of illness. The ceremony which is performed to appease the Jaw Ne is long and complicated, probably because it is a more subtle spirit and is more greatly feared than some of the others. The demon has some definite relationship to the house in which the family lives; for the Lahus say that if a goat

were to climb up on the roof of a dwelling house, it would be necessary for members of that household to make an offering to the Jaw Ne. In this regard it is also significant to note that when sacrifice is made to the Jaw Ne, the ceremony takes place outside the house of the patient.

Q. Taw

I have inquired and have asked several Lahu elders if they ever saw a "Taw" and all of them have replied in the negative, nevertheless though they have never seen one that does not shake their belief in the fact of its existence.

The Lahus say there are three kinds of Taws:-

1. Chaw Taw - The Taw that attacks man. ("Chaw" means "Man").
2. G'a Taw - The Taw that steals fowls. ("G'a" means "Fowl").
3. Shig'eu Ka - This type of Taw has neither human nor animal form; but it is like a wind.

Certain persons are believed to be in possession of Taws and those individuals who choose to bring themselves under their demoniacal control and power are able to transform their human bodies, at their convenience, into all kinds of animal forms, such as pigs, cows, buffaloes, cats, dogs and squirrels. Thus disguised the Chaw Taw goes forth in the night to perform his foul and fearful acts upon both animals and human beings. The taw is regarded as a foul spirit because it is disposed to feed on the decayed flesh of domestic animals that have been abandoned in ravines and in other lonely and isolated places. However, the Taw, on occasions, attacks live animals and he also bites and

troubles men. His sphere of activity is within the vicinity of mountain villages, set in the midst of dense jungly environment and detached and separated from other communities. Such districts in the night time are alive with all kinds of preying animals and only in cases of urgent necessity, do the villagers leave their houses and villages after dark..

A Taw is more frequently heard than seen and he is only heard under conditions when everything and everybody are perfectly still and quiet and he is seldom observed except by the person who is attacked. The Taw grapples and wrestles with man and attempts to choke his victim with a death like grip of the throat. This Chaw Taw invades houses and violently assaults people when asleep, and he also contests with wakeful man in the dark and dreadful jungle. His custom is to bite the throat of man and it becomes perfectly evident to the victim's friends and neighbours that a man has been bitten by this demon in animal form, for there is inflicted upon the victim a big neck wound which immediately swells. His speech is also affected, his words being uttered slowly and confusedly, so that the listener does not understand. Taw bite is not fatal, provided the specific and primitive medication is at hand; but should the medicine be unknown to the villagers the Taw attacked patient dies.

When a man enters into actual combat with a Taw, it is impossible to kill it on the spot. He may shoot it with his gun and slash it with his sword and draw its blood but the Taw gets away and returns to its village and there may be found a man, from

whom the Taw has gone out, lying in his house dying of gun shot wounds or from bleeding gashes inflicted by the gun or dah of the person whom the Chaw Taw had attacked.

The G'a Taw is merely a chicken thief and apart from that does not otherwise seriously disturb the normal life of a Lahu village. Sometimes it carries away the fowl from its roost while at other times it sucks the blood of chickens inside the coop. Unusual noises within the fowl houses cause the village dogs to bark and when the householder pushes/<sup>open</sup>his door and sees nothing he says that it is a Taw and he promptly begins to scold it somewhat as follows:-

You are coming here very frequently; what are you seeking? I have already fed you with the flesh of pigs and I have nothing more to give you. In a moment I will be very angry with you and if so I will see to it that you will have no place in which to live. Go to some other place, some far distant place and go right speedily.

The third form of Taw, the Shig'eu Ka, the Lahus regard with much fear; for an attack by this demon whose action resembles the wind, leaves its victim weak and speechless. The illness which the Shig'eu Ka causes is none other than paralysis. The Lahus say that if it has a body it is never visible but its voice is heard like the rushing sound of wind. It is just in the locality where the victim is attacked that the strong wind is apparent; for the immediate environment is observed to be perfectly still and quiet. At the moment of onslaught the afflicted person

experiences a sensation as if a current of air entered and surged through his body and he suddenly falls on the ground. If the shig'eu Ka is an especially vicious one, its attack is of such a violent nature as to leave the individual speechless and paralysed. If the unfortunate man is found soon after the seizure there is some hope of his recovery; but if the attack occurs on some lonely jungle path and he is not found until long after the attack, he dies.

R. Demoniacal Possession.

In the treatment of this phase of animism it should be made perfectly clear from the beginning of the discussion that the spirit of demon possession is different and separate from all the other evil or good spirits to which I have previously referred. I mean to say that the spirit of demoniacal possession as we find it in Kengtung State is a particular and specific kind of demon. For instance a person cannot be demoniacally possessed by the demon of the river or the evil spirit of the mountain. He can only be bitten by them; but they never take up their residence in the body of a person, and cause him to have what look like fits of madness. The action of those spirits compared with the action of the spirit of demon possession is entirely different, as the Lahu expressions indicate. There are two phrases used to express the method of demon activity namely, "Ne Cheve" and "Ne Gehve". The former means "Spirit Bites" and the latter, "Spirit enters, dwells or possesses." An arrow when it enters its target and a football when it goes into the goal are referred to



as "geh peu". It is also a noteworthy fact that neither offerings nor sacrifices are made to the spirit of demoniacal possession whereas it is the custom to appease with offerings all the biting spirits.

There are really two kinds of demon possession spirits but they are actually one species. The names of the two are:-

1. Yaka Na (Na means black).
2. YakaHpu (Hpu means white).

The Yaka Na, as its name suggests is the more fierce and dangerous of the two. The chief difference between them is that the Yaka Hpu confines its activities within the mouth of the possessed person and does not enter the abdominal region as does the Yaka Na. Possession by the latter is very frequently fatal whereas individuals possessed by the Yaka Hpu seldom if ever die as the direct result of its action.

The whole village knows when a member of the community is demoniacally possessed from an observance of his behaviour. The beset and overtaken person cannot remain quiet for some troubling monster seems to writhe his entire body. He reveals a scolding disposition and when he speaks he frequently uses a language with which he has had no previous knowledge. For instance if the demon that possesses a Lahu man is a Yaka Na belonging to some Shan man, the Lahu will answer questions in the Shan language and if it is a Yaka Na of a Chinaman, he will speak in Chinese. It is not really the man who answers but the demon within him is believed to do the speaking.

Everything possible is done to ascertain the identity of the demon, his name and the village where he resides and it is with reluctance the demon divulges the desired information. The possessed man knows nothing of what is actually transpiring; for it is the demon who is in charge and he acts and speaks through him. The face and eyes of the beset individual turn as red as fire and when he himself speaks his words are unintelligible. The demon in the body moves from one part to another in its attempt to avoid exorcism and all forceful and some unmentionable methods are used to drive the evil spirit out. It must be driven out at any cost for if it is allowed to remain long, it will devour the patient's liver and death will ensue. The patient is vigorously beaten with sticks and bows, pinched with the blacksmith's pincers, stabbed and pricked with the teeth and claws of wild boar, tiger and bear; guns are fired over his shoulder and the crupper of a pack-bullock is tied about his neck. Since the demon possesses a person with unwashed and smelly hair, one of the means used to get rid of the monster is to thoroughly cleanse the hair with a specially prepared mixture and until the evil spirit departs exorcists continue to sprinkle oil on the patient, the odour of which is displeasing to the demon. The body is massaged and kept warm near the fire at which time the liquids of a thorny creeper and of a bulb plant (the Lahu name for the latter is Yaboloe) are rubbed vigorously into the skin. When the name and address of the demon have been obtained, rice for which the

patient may have asked is put in a bag and slung over his shoulder. The distracted man is assisted to his feet and is led from his house and is driven and beaten from the village by a company of shouting villagers. Sometimes the demon departs when the possessed man falls down by the roadside during the process of exorcism while there are other instances where the demon does not come out until the village and house of the owner of the demon have been reached. When the evil spirit is successfully exorcised, the man comes to himself and gets well; but in cases of unsuccessful exorcism, death is both sudden and sure.

Sickly people are usually the subjects of demoniacal possession; but the Lahus say that there are instances of persons who apparently had perfect health who have been overtaken by the Yaka Na. During the period of possession the patient foams at the mouth and he seems to have almost supernatural strength and he feels as if a fire were being held over him. He is not conscious of any pain, though sharp-pointed implements and severe repeated beatings with sticks and bows have inflicted serious wounds in several parts of his body. After the devil has gone out, the man is utterly weak and it takes him several weeks to recover from his numerous aches and sores.

The Yaka Na and Yaka Hpu are most active during the long rainy season, at a time when certain trees are in blossom. This is the time when physical vitality is at a low ebb and that

condition renders man a more easy prey to the powerful and disturbing demon. At the outset of a seizure the villagers practise a sneeze test on the patient to ascertain if he is actually possessed. They take a bit of his shirt and burn it and cause him to inhale the smoke. If he sneezes he is not a victim of the Yaka Na or Yaka Hpu, but should he not sneeze that is an indication that he is "Ne Gehve", demoniacally possessed.

In the course of this discussion I have made reference to "the owner of the demon" and perhaps I ought to make a little more clear the meaning of this phrase. In Lahu land persons may quite unconsciously be the shelter or refuge of the Yaka Na and Yaka Hpu. Without their personal knowledge they harbour The Evil Spirit, and they are regarded as "Ne cawve" people. "Cawve" means "to have". Men or women who have the demon are very undesirable persons to have in a community and a village that is frequently disturbed by cases of "Ne Gehve" will resort to action and have the unconscious owners of the demon expelled from the district. These "Ne cawve" folk do not voluntarily send forth the spirit to possess persons living either in their own village or some other community. In fact they deny that they are giving shelter to any demon but despite their protestations, they are branded by the community as "Ne cawve" people and are banished from the district. Such folk frequently become the care and charge of the missionary, who sometimes forms them into village groups. Their own friends utterly abandon them and wish to have nothing to do either with

them of their property. The latter if bought would probably transfer the demon of the seller to the purchaser.

A Shan neighbour of ours was accused of being a witch in the above mentioned sense. The "Ne cawve" man was a very industrious silversmith and in religion a faithful Buddhist. So far as I observed him he seemed to be a man who strictly minded his own business and was a peace loving citizen of Kengtung town. A Shan woman in the district came under a "spell", the convulsing experience which the Lahus call "Ne Gehve". After much beating with sticks the woman declared that she was possessed by the demon of our friend the silversmith and from that moment of the demon's infallible accusation, the innocent man was stigmatised as a Ne cawve man and he was immediately requested to leave the town. When over a period of months he refused to leave his home and property, his house at night was frequently stoned and fired with guns. The man became fearful for the safety of his wife and son and in desperation the family sought our help. I quartered the family temporarily in the Mission hospital and reported the case to the Sawbwa and the British Political Officer. The promised protection of the former was never realised and the sane advice of the latter was ultimately but very reluctantly followed. He advised the man to leave the district for the reason that the infuriated Shans might any night set fire to the house and so destroy both the family and property.

Another frequent explanation of illness is the flight

of the soul from the body which may be occasioned by fright or from waking a person from sleep too suddenly. When a man is startled from sleep, if he sits up and stares vacantly into space his friends say that his soul has departed, "Awha hpawve". They take such a man and put him to sleep again and allow him to awake normally and when he does so his soul awakes with him. To prevent the flight of the soul from the body the Lahus tie cords around their wrists.

The Kaws have relationship with similar spirits the only difference being that the demons are given Kaw names. There is Neh mu Neh cheh Ne - the Cave spirit- which sometimes appears in human form and it can be heard calling and its cry resembles the loud call of hunters when beating the bush. Illness speedily comes to those persons who offend this Cave spirit. Then the Maw za Ma yu is a stealthy demon that is disposed to steal away the soul of the living and the Shon Bye Lo nyo which is the surviving ghost of women who have died childless. It is always dressed in blue coloured clothes and for this reason the husband of a wife about to give birth to a child must not dress himself in blue dress. If he should do so the Shon Bye Lo nyo would be angry and would express his displeasure by causing some deformity to the unborn infant and if abnormal when born according to Kaw custom the child would need to be killed. This demon has power to make the wind blow with destructive force.

The Kaw, La Hpya, is the evil spirit of demoniacal possession which acts in indentically the same way as the Lahu Yaka Na,

only the La Hpya possesses animals as well as men. Neither offering nor sacrifice is made to this demon but no effort is spared to speedily exorcise it. The U Ja Neh is the evil spirit that dwells at the cross-roads and the Yaw ja Ya neh is the water spirit that resides in small streams. Other mature spirits are:-

Du Je	Mountain spirit
Lo Hkun	Rock spirit
Suh Ne	Tree spirit
Muh ja Muhyu	Lake spirit
Dobal Agon	Sun spirits
Gashon Ahkeu	Moon spirits
Chawmaw ma	Star spirit
Ai Daw Hka Hpa	} Sea spirits
Ja la Gaw ma	
Yula La muh	
Hawla Meh jeh	

In connection with the spirit of the rainbow to which the Kaws give the name "Ma Ylaw" there is an interesting story as to its origin. As a reward for his superhuman knowledge a widow's son received as his bride a daughter of a prosperous man. The girl did not want to marry him but the father true to his pledged word compelled the daughter to accompany the young man to his home. The bride while living there became very much

discouraged when she observed her husband was not a real man at all; for he promptly transformed himself into a fish. The mother-in-law comforted the young wife by telling her that her husband was not a fish and advised her to make further observations. During her investigations she found the skin of the fish and taking it she quickly and secretly burned it. When the husband returned he discovered that his skin or covering was missing and because it was lost, it would be impossible for him to live longer on the earth. He therefore killed a fowl and prepared his last earthly meal, which he and his wife ate together on the open veranda of the house. When they were eating a great light shone upon them, a light that reached to the heavens and upon the curve of this rainbow light the two of them rode away to the spirit world and were ever afterwards known as the "Ma Ylaw"- the Rainbow Spirit.

When the Kaws move to a new village site and abandon their pig-feeding troughs, rice-pounding bowls and in fact any receptacle capable of holding water, such articles are always turned upside down so that no water can enter. Should the rainbow drink the water from those containers, the "Ma Ylaw" would be offended and would punish the owners of those articles by biting them and causing them to be sick. The illnesses which the Ma Ylaw causes are two kinds, namely, eye disease and temporary loss of speech.

The Kaws believe there are many good spirits which guard and protect and ward off evil influence. The images of the



"Hkaw De" and Bvuh Je" placed at the gateway entrance to Kaw villages are protective spirits which are set there for the purpose of guarding the best interests of the community. However, should any one carelessly treat the Hkaw De and Bvuh De they would punish all offenders. Images of birds made of wood are placed on top of the gate and the good spirits which the birds represent bite and peck any evil influence that would seek an entrance to the village.

The Kachins assert that illness of both animals and men is caused by evil spirits. The most violent of those demons are the Mushen-Lightning spirit; Bungphoi- The spirit of the Storm; Sawns- The Ghosts of women who died in childbirth; Lasa-the demon that causes fatal accidents; Lawng- the evil spirit of black magic and Phyi which resembles the spirit of demoniacal possession of both the Lahus and Kaws.

C.Gilhodes in describing the Phyi says, "The phyi", as it is remembered is the seventh soul of certain persons, which may be called wizards. This minla is held to be a bad sprite, of which the one that owns it can make use to do harm to the neighbour; but in most cases it follows its own whim, and unknown to its master makes many victims among men and animals. It chiefly attacks the heart and the liver and produces violent pains that easily bring on death.----- They often imagine themselves to be bitten by a phyi.

123 "To expel it, the dumsa sacrifices a pig near the house or in the wood.

"The person that has a phyi communicates it to his partner and to all the children. This is why the wizard families are rather common, someone or other is found in nearly each village. " \*

It will be here noted that Gilhodes refers to the Phyi as both a biting spirit and as a demon to which sacrifice is made. In these two respects the Kachin Phyi differs from the Yaka Na of the Lahus and the La Hpya of the Kaws; for in the case of the latter two, as has before been mentioned, they are not regarded as biting spirits but are demons that possess, occupy and dwell in both persons and animals and they are also distinguished from the biting spirits as demons to which sacrifice is not offered.

The Kachins also believe that there are some good and guardian spirits, such as the ones which protect the village and house from epidemics and disease. Nature spirits, such as the Land Spirit and the spirit of the sun, are regarded as friendly in disposition whose favour and aid give prosperity to both crops and domestic animals.

To bring illness and disaster to an enemy the Kachins sometimes resort to black magic which is very similar in both method and effect as the Lahu Ne Pi Hpfuh dave custom already described.

With special reference to the Kachins a Dr. Anderson is quoted in the following words:- "Every hill, forest and stream has its own nat of greater or lesser power: every accident and illness is the work of some malignant or vindictive

\* C. Gilhodes. The Kachins Rel. & Myth. pp. 295, 6.

one of these viewless ministers"\*

Groves adjacent to their villages are sacred to the Shans; for within those quiet and silent woods dwell spirits which protect the best interests of the community. Such spirit-grounds are called "Long Hkam", within which the felling of trees is strictly prohibited. In the midst of a Long Hkam there is usually an immense banyan tree or some other tree of peculiar growth which is chosen by the Shans as the particular residence of the grove spirit.

The Nawng Tung Lake spirit of Kengtung town resides in a Mai Hai tree at the edge of the Sawbwa's lake. Formerly Kengtung was a Wa State but the Wa were conquered by invaders from Siam. Though the Was were driven from Kengtung, the spirit of their great chief, Wa Kang, remained behind and to this present time the Shans believe that it is the ghost of Wa Kang that presides over the lake.

Of all the nats of Kengtung the most venerable is the Soa Pa Kum, which resides in a large tree, situated near the heart of the city. At the base of the tree an altar has been built of stone, upon which gifts are regularly offered. There can be no doubt that tree worship and the worship of spirits which reside in trees are conspicuous features of Shan animistic belief and practice. In every large Shan town there is a tree to which the Shans give the name of "Sai Mung". The word "Sai" means heart and "Mung" means country. Thus in a metaphorical sense a Sai Mung

\* Gazetteer of Upper Burma and The Shan States. p. 419.

tree is the heart of the district or community in which it is situated. There is such a tree in the city of Kengtung and at the base of the tree there is a brick altar. In the Shan town of Mung Yang I watched for hours during two days, when Buddhists priests and laymen performed religious ceremonies of an animistic nature at the base of a Sai Mung tree. This rite was public and social in character and involved the whole community. Upon four large newly but roughly woven bamboo trays, offerings of every description were deposited. The gifts consisted of clay images of all domestic animals; pieces of cloth which represented wearing apparel; tea and tobacco and all manner of foods. The trays replete with their offerings were taken and placed at the base of the Sai Mung tree, at which time prayer was offered by a man dressed in the clothes of a layman. After the dedication of the gifts, the trays by means of attached ropes, were slung on to bamboo carrying poles, and eight men, two men to each tray, burdened with their weight, took them away to the four furthestmost boundaries of the township and there abandoned them by the roadside. On the first day, through the medium of this ritual the evil spirits and disease were banished from the town and district. On the second day of the ceremony Buddhist priests in their yellow robes sat upon mats on the ground, and the long row which they formed faced toward the Sai Mung tree which was about twenty yards distant. In the intervening space between the priests and the tree were seated the representative heads of households and each sat under

his own little tabernacle which consisted of a tripod of bamboo poles, in the top joints of which was a little rice, covered over and secured with paper or cloth. Around the trunk of the sacred tree were placed white cotton strings which extended towards and connected with each and every tripod and the ends of those unbroken cords, which seemed to bind all participants in a bond of unity and good fellowship, were deposited before the seated priests who recited prayers asking that blessing might come to the whole town which the assembled company represented. Those friendly religious leaders told me that on the first day of the ceremony they exorcised the evil spirits from their midst and on the following day they requested that the good spirits might come and take control. But from what I have written, it will be observed that on both days of this ritual the Sai Mung tree was the main factor in the ceremony and it was there the interests of the town were focussed. If the tree itself did not confer favour, it would seem as if it were a medium through which blessing and general prosperity were communicated. On other occasions, travellers for instance when starting upon a long journey, place a leaf on the fence of Sai Mung tree, at which time a silent request is made for protection and when they return another leaf is offered as an expression of gratitude.

But while the Shans do have those guardian and protective spirits, on the other hand they very greatly fear a host of wicked and evil demons. There is the Shan "Hpeu" which is the same as the

Yaka Na of the Lahus-the spirit of demon possession;the "Pe Su" is identical to the Lahu Taw and the "Pe Tum Moi" is the demon that invades jungle camps to bite and make ill both man and beast. The surviving ghost of a thief whose habit in life was to steal property from Buddhist temples is a "Pe Hpít" and the "Pe Meu" is a clothes' thief. In the district of MungKo, there is what the Shans call the Pa Hio Pe Meu cemetery,where have been found small bones which remains suggest the existence of a dwarfed anthropoid community. My informant,Sao Kawng Tai,who is the son of the present Sawbwa of Kengtung State,further told me that it is the custom of the Mung Ko people to put identification marks on all their new clothes which frequently are stolen and are found sometimes on tree tops in torn condition which cases of theft, the Shans say,are due to the activity of the "Pe Meu". A sword or a motor car that accidentally wounds and kills people is said to have a "Pe Hung". A death causing automobile would be called a "Me Hung" or "Tai Hung" car;but it is possible to exorcise the evil influence from the vehicle. It should be said that "pe" is the Shan word for demon or evil spirit.

A mountain the shape of which resembles a sleeping giant, situated seven miles from Kengtung town is called Loipit. The caretaker or "Pu Chong" of the Wat Keng Yung Buddhist temple was about to die.His name was Ai Put. The priests requested him to have regard for the interests of the temple and to cause the influences of the spiritual world into which he was about to enter to work mightily for the prosperity of their religious community.

(At the time of Ai Put's death there were two rival Buddhist sects in Kengtung). After his decease, the ghost of Ai Put made repeated and regular visits to the Wat Keng Yung and the priests fed him twice daily. On one eventful occasion the responsibility for feeding the Ghost was delegated to a mischievously minded temple novitiate, who poured hot boiling rice over the extended hand of Ai Put. The infuriated ghost seized the boy, tore him asunder and hung his limbs on the rafters of the temple. The place of worship, the adjacent district and even the palace of the Sawbwa became haunted and so powerful were the ghosts, it became necessary to engage the services of experienced exorcists from Siam in order to drive away the evil spirits. The ghost of Ai Put was successfully exorcised and went to reside in the mountain of Loipit, seven miles from the city. Until now the Shans of Kengtung once a year or once every three years, make an effigy of Ai Put which is thrown into a river and carried away with the current. Other evil spirits and all forms of disease are invited and commanded to join Ai Put and to leave the city.

Some years ago the Sawbwa of Kengtung was very ill and it was thought and expressed that his illness might be due to his keeping too many animals in captivity. It was at this time a bear received its freedom.

I think it is perfectly apparent from the above cited examples and illustrations that those races which live under primitive conditions, have a very definite belief concerning the relationship between demons and disease and in fact to their minds

there is no doubt that the evil spirits are the cause of most of their illnesses. This will be still more evident as we proceed to discuss the question of offering and sacrifice.



## 12.

SACRIFICING AND OFFERING.

It is here, through the dedicatory act of his gifts that the animist definitely enters the sphere of religion; for by means of those offerings he brings himself into relationship with the spiritual forces in which he believes and concerning which he has some conception more or less vague. In this discussion we will attempt to show the occasion, purpose and method of sacrifice and offering and at the same time we will try to indicate to whom or to what the gifts are made.

Perhaps of equal interest and importance is the question, by whom are the oblations made? In answer it should be said that in large Lahu communities there are usually three men who hold religious office. These spiritual leaders are farmers who work in the fields as do the other members of the village, but who, because they have shown themselves to be adept in spiritual affairs, have been elected by the community to perform sacred duties. These three men are:-

1. Pawku - Priest.
2. Mawpa - Seer.
3. Shepa - Doctor or Healer.

In small Lahu villages, the Pawku and Mawpa may be one and the same man; but in the large communities at least there is generally one man for each respective position.

The principal duty of the Pawku is to lead the people in the worship of "G'uisha", who is the Supreme Being of the

Lahus. His duties are performed in the village temple which is dedicated to the praise of "G'uisha" and is never used for the offerings and sacrifices to the "Ne" - evil spirits - the characteristic feature of animism. No temple seems necessary for the celebration of animistic beliefs and practices; for the evil spirits are immolated in mountain, forest and stream.

The Mawpa is rated as next in importance to the Pawku; for while the latter is primarily the mediator between "G'uisha" and the people, he may also perform much of the work of the Mawpa. The word "Maw" means to see and therefore the Mawpa is the man possessed of those occult powers which make it possible for him to discern the spirits and to reveal to the sick, the demons which have been offended, and that have caused their illness. He is a man to be feared because he has also powers of magic which he can use to inflict severe pain on enemies.

Under the chapter on Healing we will consider the work of the Shepa; suffice it to say here that he depends upon spiritual forces for the successful performance of his healing art.

The Lahus make offering to both G'uisha and the Ne. Within the "Bon Yeh" - House of Blessing - and within the temple area no blood sacrifices are made to G'uisha and it is also worthy of note that the priest when he renders the gifts makes no reference to the Ne. His petitions are solely directed to the Supreme Being. At the regular temple services it is customary for the Pawku to burn candles and incense and the worshippers bring with them popped rice and paper figures of men and of pond

lilies. The rice is scattered on the floor when the Pawku closes his prayer and the representations of both men and flowers are hung as offerings within the temple. In Lahu Bon Yehs I have seen offerings of cloth and blankets. While the candles and incense burn the priest and elders chant a song of praise as follows:-

O God, with you are the seeds of life  
Have mercy upon us and give them to us.

The women who are seated outside the open door of the Bon Yeh, chant their petition and say:-

We are the women who sweep the house  
And care for it. We are waiting for your  
Coming, O God. When will you come?

Still another company in the temple compound beats gongs and drums and the service is concluded with a prayer to G'uisha offered by the Pawku. On these holy occasions the villagers attend the Bon Yeh three times a day.

The Lahus offer the first fruits of the harvest to G'uisha and by so doing they acknowledge the Supreme Being as the giver of life and of every good material gift. In the traditions of the race, the Lahus have preserved a story concerning a fabulous human giant, who was the first man to be created by G'uisha. His name was Ca Nu Ca Peh. To him G'uisha gave the implements of agriculture and the rice seed with which to sow his fields and ultimately when Ca Nu harvested his crops he had an abundance of rice. 'Earth's strong man' as he was known, proved to be very ungrateful and disrespectful to G'uisha

and failed to make an offering to him of the first fruits. Instead he made sacrifice to the handle of his plough and declared that it was by virtue of his efficient plough and not as the result of G'uisha's blessing that he had been prospering. This disaffection displeased G'uisha exceedingly and though he tried to convince Ca Nu of his power, the heart of the giant remained unrepentant until G'uisha placed in his body the seeds of death. Sickness and death came to him because of his irreverent forgetfulness of G'uisha and the Lahus think that like punishment will be meted out to those who in this present time should fail to offer to G'uisha the first fruits of the harvest.

At rice planting time an offering of eight candles and rice is made on an altar-table which is supported by a central post set securely in the ground. Streamers are suspended one from each of the four corners of the oblong table. Those are in the form of bamboo chains, each consisting of seven rings. At the base of the post and on the ground is scattered a little of the seed soon to be planted. This ceremony which takes place on one of two days, either "Law Nyi" - Dragon Day - or "Htawla Nyi" - Ass Day - , is given the name of "Tevala". During the day of the "Tevala" rite only a small quantity of seed is planted in the fields but after the day of offering, the farmers may proceed to plant according to their pleasure. This Lahu custom I think has been borrowed from the Shans; for the "Tevala" was the name of the chief guardian spirit of the Shans at the time of their compulsory conversion

from animism to the Buddhist faith. If the actual practice was not adopted from the Shans, the name certainly was. During the Wingaba festival, the Shan people of Kengtung place in front of their houses beautifully ornamented miniature shrines in which are hung all manner of fruit offerings. Those gold-gilt altars are the dwelling places of the "Tevala", formerly considered by past generations of animistic Shans to be the great protective spirit but which in these present times received a place of prominence only on the occasion of the Buddhist festival. It would seem as if the Lahus have adopted the word "Tevala" as an equivalent for the word "G'uisha" and though it is G'uisha who is addressed during worship in the temple on other occasions, as for instance when the priest asks for supernatural power to enable him to exorcise evil spirits, he seems to address the Supreme Being as the "Tevala". Wherever the term is used as an equivalent for "G'uisha", I am of the opinion that it is a borrowed and corrupt usage.

In the home of the Pawku there is a little shrine fenced off from the rest of the house to which is given the name of "Tevala" and in which place the Pawku makes daily offering and prayer. At this altar he makes little gifts of rice and offerings of lighted candles.

However, it is neither to G'uisha nor to the guardian spirits that the most costly offerings and sacrifices are made but rather to those evil and malicious spirits which are greatly feared to which they devote their thought, time and sacrificial gifts.

Both elaborate and detailed preparations have to be made in order to appease the Meh Ne Gu Ne - the spirit held responsible for fatal accidents. In making ready for this ceremony in which all the village participates, a house for the "Meh Ne" is built over a small stream and it is erected sufficiently high above the water to enable the afflicted family and friends to crawl beneath it. The structure is made with nine miniature rooms or divisions and the roof is made of ferns and thatch grass. Upon the up-stream side of the house are placed seven "Leo" - loosely woven bamboo mats - one at the top of each of the seven posts of the shed, while around the seven supports and "Leo" are twisted thorny canes, prickly vines and stinging plants. A water pipe is made from nine lengths of wild plantain trees and it is placed in the centre of the house and on top of the altar-table which is situated in the middle of the house. Suspended from the altar is a twisted cord of many colours - yellow, red, green, black and white and to the end of this string an egg is attached. Immediately under the hanging position of the egg a hole is dug. There is an appeal to the artistic in the preparation of carved and whittled sticks, floral figures, which decorate the four sides of the altar. Leaf cups and streamers attached to the place of offering add to its attractiveness. The actual gifts consist of two cocks, rice-water mixed with salt to represent yeast, two cups of liquor, rice, candles, money - seven rupees and eight annas - and two yards of white cloth.

When all these preparations have been completed the Mawpa begins his address to the soul of the man who has been accid-

entally killed. The spirit of such unfortunate persons becomes a much feared "Meh Ne" which is the cause of all fatal accidents. Let us say the name of the deceased is Ca Na. The Seer's speech of exorcism is somewhat as follows:-

You caused the death of Ca Na and do not say afterwards that I did not tell you so. You are not the only one that has had to die. At the beginning of time, when Ca Nu Ca Peh did not listen to "G'uisha" word, sickness and death came into the world. When man touched the "under heaven tree" it withered and died. Look at the Chinaman as he rides his mule. He travels from one end of the country to the other but he, too, must die when the lord of death touches him. Look again and see that prosperous Shan, living happily in his tile-roofed house. The death water has not touched him yet, still though he now sits on his silk carpets, the time will come when he too will sicken and die. You are not the only one that has had to die. Listen to the Seer's word and be gone. Further, consider the sun though it shines every day on four sides of the earth, when it is bitten by the tiger it dies and the dog-eaten moon and the hen-pecked stars, they, too, die. G'uisha could not prevent sickness and death which are of his creating. You are not the only one that has to die. Take this three

year old cock and be gone. Eat this bitter popped buck wheat and go. Stay your hand and go to the place where you have come from. Yonder in G'uisha's dark place where the sun never shines, the sleeping quarters of your relatives and friends, where in one day seven black bulls and seven pigs are killed and the flesh board is ever wet with red and black blood, to that place go and never return here. Do not think that in this community you have relations. Listen to the word of the Mawpa and go. If you do not listen to my commands hereafter you will not have a place in which to live and eat. Until the top and base of the mountain and the source and mouth of the river exchange their respective positions, do not come back. Do not follow after your friends and relatives. If you wish to chase and pursue, follow the pigs and bears. At the bend of the river, at the thorny bush, there is a yellow and green buzzing fly. He is your relation - follow him. In the wild jungle you will overtake white and black monkeys; those are your friends: go after them. In the abandoned highland rice field, where the broom plant grows, you will see two mated birds, yellow and green and when you hear them call, pursue them; for they, too, are your relatives. Moreover, do not follow the Seer back to the village; but if you desire to track someone, follow



the female bird, "Pipeujalama". I, the Seer, am not skilled in discerning the evil spirits; but the bird is. Chase the bird: do not follow me.

The following sentences of the Mawpa are spoken directly to the deceased Ca Na:-

Soul of Ca Na follow your father and mother into the land of death and be gone. Your parents have silver and gold flags and candles: go to their place. The lord of death who stands at the forks of the road looks at your name in the book of death and declares the time for you to die has arrived. To that silver and gold village, above the dwelling of the chief, where burn the silver and gold candles and where your relatives live there go and stay.

The Seer at the close of his address speaks of Ca Na as Mr. Death and accordingly changes his name to Ca Suh - "suh" means death.

Ca Suh O! In the land of death your bride Na Suh - -Miss Death- awaits you: go and marry her. Na Suh will cut the thatch grass for the roof and you will prepare the timbers with which to build your house that will be located in the village of silver and gold. Your dwelling will have nine rooms and its walls will be of silver and gold. The death seeds of you both I now collect and put in G'uisha's death place.

The necks of the two sacrificial cocks are slit open within the "Meh Ne" house and at the moment the fowls are immolated, the cord to which the suspended egg was tied, is held by the relatives of the deceased. The Mawpa takes a lighted candle with which he burns and severs the string and the egg drops into its grave which was dug to receive it. The symbolism of this act declares the complete annulment of all relationships between the living and the dead, for the cord of union has been forever broken.

Meanwhile a large stone has been thoroughly heated in an open fire and hot water has been prepared. The hot stone is placed in position directly under the improvised water pipe and when all is in readiness boiling water is poured through the pipes and it falls upon the heated stone. The steaming water is carefully banded up in a channel and secured and by so doing the "Meh Ne" of the deceased is prevented from returning to the village in angry pursuit of relatives and friends.

The Mawpa and his helpers eat the flesh of one of the fowls, the body of which has been boiled whole. Before being eaten the cooked bird is offered and placed on the altar-table for a few minutes. The second fowl does not appear to be eaten, and is probably regarded as the sole property of the "Meh Ne" in which the living can have no part.

During part of this ceremony the Mawpa sits on an improvised iron stool which in reality is the three-legged iron stand on which the Lahus do their cooking. One such article from the household of the dead man is used for the occasion.

While the Seer conducts the service, one of his assistants stands by and renders aid by beating a cultivating hoe or some other iron implement. The deceased was perhaps shot by a gun or wounded with a dah and thus suffered defeat in death. The Seer and his helper by their methods of exorcism reassert in the presence of the community their mastery over iron and the "Meh Ne" and all other evil spirits connected therewith.

When the sacrificial ceremony is finished, all who have participated in the service, crawl under the "Meh Ne" house and altar and they continue to walk up stream for the distance of a furlong in order that the "Meh Ne" failing to discover their footprints, might not be able to follow them to their village. A sense of fear and awe grips the hearts and minds of all as they return in silence to their homes.

A Lahu man with a lingering illness and who becomes thin and weak and shows no signs of recovery of health is said to be a victim of the "Jaw Ne". This spirit seems in some way to be related to the house spirit. At any rate the offerings and sacrifices connected with the "Jaw Ne" are made at the house of the sick person. As part of the ceremony, four representative houses are built for the "Jaw Ne" which consist simply of miniature posts and cross beams, which are placed in a leaning position against the dwelling of the patient. To make the shelters attractive to the "Jaw Ne" several kinds of decorative floral carvings on sticks of Ama wood and bracelets and umbrella like hats made from Ama bark and a garland of twisted grass are attached. Pine tree

branches as substitutes for horses are set up; grass and leaves wrapped in a white cloth are made to represent a human figure, which is placed on a rice-winnowing tray and a tiny live chicken, dressed in a white rag, with its little head sticking out through a hole in the cloth and with its legs bound, is taken and tied to the garland of twisted grass. Other offerings consist of a female suckling pig and a small yellow hen. Buck wheat and a little of most everything belonging to the patient as well as leaves and bamboo bark are taken and chopped up into small fragments and placed in a large cup, and during the progress of the ceremony which continues all day, the Mawpa at intervals takes a little of the mixture and scatters it on the ground. Four cups of whisky are also placed on the offering tray, while on still another vessel, on which a white cloth is spread, are deposited a lump of salt, a large piece of silver and silver bracelets.

The Seer receives as a personal remuneration for his services one rupee and two yards of cloth for his turban. With a view to gain mastery over the "Jaw Ne" eight candles each are offered to the House and the Village spirits. The members of the household that have called for this ceremony have each to make an offering of some personal garment which are put in a basket of open weaving and which in turn is deposited at the altar. During the progress of the ceremony it is not permissible to have a fire in the house but the householder and his family may go in and out of the house at their pleasure. When all the gifts have been fully prepared the Mawpa offers them to the "Jaw Ne". After beseeching supernatural aid the Seer slits open the neck of the yellow

sacrificial hen, and with the feathers of the bird, he sprinkles with blood all the gifts of offering. The fowl is presented to the "Jaw Ne" and afterwards it is taken away and cooked and eaten by the Mawpa and his helpers. The presented human figure, with the little live chicken attached to its back and the pine branch pony substitute are taken and are thrown over the top of the patient's house from one side to the other. Everything connected with the sacrifice is later taken outside the village and burned and thus the "Jaw Ne" is appeased.

Once every year the whole village makes an offering to the Mountain spirit. The ceremony is one of the chief events of the year and it takes place during the Full moon of July. In the morning every member of the village brings a candle, and a small quantity of paddy and rice which gifts are presented to the Mawpa and he in turn takes them and offers them to the protective and helpful "Hka Ne" - Village spirit which resides in the reserve at the head of the hamlet at which time the Seer invokes the aid of the "Hka Ne" as they proceed to exorcise the malignant Mountain spirit. At noon time all the elders bring candles and food offerings and the Pawku prays to G'uisha in the temple.

An important part of the ceremony is the preparation of two large trays on which are put all kinds of gifts for the Mountain spirit. They cut down the Ama tree and from its wood they make large knives, guns, spears and small dahs. With clay they mould figures of horses, elephants and of men riding those animals. Other clay objects of fowls, pigs, dogs, cows and buffaloes are formed. From every house rice is collected and upon each of the

two trays are deposited four mounds of cooked rice. Vegetables and meat of all descriptions are also offered. Pieces of cloth and sewing threads of various colours are added to the gifts. While these preparations proceed, others engage their time making two long ropes and the loosely woven bamboo mat, named "Leo". When the many details have all been completed all the villagers both young and old gather in the middle of the village. The Pawku and the Mawpa stand facing each other at opposite sides of the sacrificial trays and while they hold in their hands lighted candles, each in his turn addresses the Mountain spirit thus:-

O Lord of the Mountain, if your home is in the East return and stay there; if your abode is in the West go back there. If the source or mouth of the river is your dwelling place go and remain there. Just now we are offering to you all kinds of animals and food of every description. We have also brought you clothes. We are feeding you sweet food: eat it and go away. To a city with a market place and people and where there are both raw and cooked meat; a place in which there is no lack of food, there go and live.

When the Pawku and Mawpa have finished their address to the Mountain spirit, all the congregation expectorate and say "Twi-twi".

The trays are carried some distance from the village and are abandoned by some lonely path. The villagers take the two

newly made ropes and place them on top and across the village gateway and a "Leo" is also fixed to the gate. A "Leo" is taken by the head of each house and is placed above the door of the main entrance to each home. The ropes and "Leo" are for the purpose of preventing the return of the Mountain spirit to their village and houses. Evil spirits are disposed to make their temporary dwelling in wearing apparel. Because of this the Lahu women plan to have all the family sewing finished a month before this annual ceremony of exorcism, with the idea in mind that if perchance the Mountain spirit does occupy the newly made garments, it will be driven away during the great day of offering.

In addition to the offerings and sacrifices which have to be made in the case of illness, there are nine definitely appointed seasons in which it is necessary for the Kaw people to immolate the spirits. Those nine occasions are as follows:-

Ka Htawn Pa. This is the New Year celebration season at which four days are devoted to religious ceremony and festive activities. The religious feature has as its basis the feeding of and the making of sacrifices to the spirits of ancestors and animals. The gifts that are offered consist of fowls, bread, tea and liquor.

Ya Hku Za. In January or a little later, the Kaw people stop work for another four days to make further sacrifices to the spirits. At this time they express gratitude for having been permitted to live in the new year. During the Ya Hku Za, the

Pu ban - the village gate repairer - makes an offering of two pigs for which the villagers partly compensate him with small gifts of money. Each household contributes two fowls and these together with the pigs are sacrificed with the wish and hope that the community will be visited with the blessing of prosperity and health.

Homi Zwe Ma Law. During this holy occasion the village gate is repaired and it is the time when the new wooden figures or images of the Hkaw De and Bvuh Je, life like in size, are made and set up at the gateway, as guardian spirits of the community. Every house has to give a hen and a cock, a little liquor and tea and the village as a group contributes one pig. These gifts are offered in sacrifice to the protective spirits which stand guard at the gate as sentinels to prevent the entrance of evil forces. The ceremony lasts two days.

Ya Hka Ahpe Law. This rite is performed at seed planting time, when the entire village ceases work and devotes two days to the placation of demons. On the first day each house gives one fowl and on the second a pig is presented by the whole hamlet. The water spirit of springs and streams is immolated at this season.

Hkah Yeh Yeh. At this time dahs and spears are made of wood with which to drive the demons from the village. Shouting and excited men run in and out of houses while they chase and exorcise the evil spirits. In the course of the pursuit cucumbers are vigorously cut to pieces. When the demon hunters have eventually succeeded in driving the nats beyond the village precincts, the spears and dahs are placed on the outer side of the community



entrance gate. Each household makes an offering of a fowl during the two days devoted to this ceremony.

Yaw La La. On this occasion one fowl is offered to the guardian spirits of ancestors which have been dead for seven generations. That their protection might be extended to the living children seems to be the purpose of this simple sacrifice.

Cheh Nu Yu. The ripening grain and the approach of harvest call for still another oblation, at which time spirits are immolated by the sacrifice of a cock.

Ho Shin Ahpe Law. Two days are spent when this rite is performed. Every household must crack open a hen's egg and since it is the season when A Hpe Mi Yeh (God) comes riding on his horse, a load of grass must be cut and kept in readiness on the veranda of the house and a turf of earth as well, to feed the pony of A Hpe Mi Yeh.

Those are the nine appointed times when all members of Kaw communities are obliged to make oblations and no one would be allowed to remain in a Kaw village were he to refuse to make offering and sacrifice on those prescribed occasions. The ladder-stair entrance of Kaw houses consists of nine steps. The numerals, three, seven and nine seem to be regarded both by Lahus and Kaws as numbers of perfection and completeness.

Chinese and persons of races other than Kaw cannot have any relationship to the "Myicha Ne" altar in all Kaw houses. Men of other tribes occasionally marry Kaw women and they are permitted to live in Kaw villages if they agree to observe the above mentioned nine holy occasions. However, those foreigners

living within the gate since they can have no part in the "Myicha Ne" are not under any obligation to make offering to it, as for instance at harvest time, when it is the custom of the Kaws to offer the first sheaves on the "Myicha Ne" altar. It is the unifying principle or spirit of a Kaw family; it cannot be purchased but it can be inherited and in fact is handed down from one family and from one generation to another and the eldest and youngest sons are its recipients and preservers. The "Myicha Ne" is not only the centre around which a Kaw family gathers as a unit; but it is also the medium through which the living members of the race maintain their contact with the spirits of ancestors long since dead and gone; for the offerings placed on the altar of the "Myicha Ne" are for the deified souls of the dead.

Among the Kaws there are two religious leaders who perform the sacrificial rites, namely, the "Hpi Ma" - greater priest - and the "Be Maw" - lesser priest. The former has authority to sacrifice to the spirits as many as three buffaloes and the latter may offer to the limit of seventeen fowls and one pig. The "Hpi Ma" is now rare so at the present time the "Be Maw" is the more common type. By a process of divination it is the duty of the priest to discover which spirit has been offended and what sacrifice is required to appease the demon and to secure the healing of the patient. Another person of equal importance is the "Nyi Hpa". This Seer is a woman, who has power both to inflict and cure illness. Because of her occult wisdom and wonder-working powers she is

more greatly feared than either the Hpi Ma or the Be Maw. She has contacts with the spiritual world and has the ability to cause her soul to go out from her body on a mission of investigation and search. She sees the demons, has relationship with them and when her soul returns to her body, she makes known to the sick person what the malicious spirits desire in the form of oblations.

The purpose of all sacrifice and offering seems to be four-fold, namely, to propitiate offended spirits; to secure healing for the sick; to obtain a plentiful harvest and general material prosperity and to feed the souls of the departed. There might also be added, and I think sometimes it might be found present as a motive, the desire of the giver to express gratitude. This is certainly the case with regard to the Lahus when they offer the first-fruits to "G'uisha".

As regards method, sacrificial fowls are killed by striking them with a stick, while pigs are slaughtered by a piercing thrust in the heart. At seed planting time the offered fowl is burned. At death two fowls are offered, one of which is burned alive and though the flesh of the second bird is eaten, no relative of the deceased is permitted to partake of it. To the mind of some Kaws the different parts of a sacrificial fowl are regarded as suitable gifts to nature spirits. Thus the blood is presented to the lord of the earth; the feathers are given as a burnt-offering to the spirit of the wind; the feet to placate the guardian spirit of the village; wings and sinews to the sun-spirit; head to the demon of thunder and lightning;

intestines to the River; heart to the moon-spirit; eyes to the spirit of the stars; the fat to the demons of the mist and the liver to the spirit of rain.

Of all the animistic races of Kengtung, the Kachins are reputed to be the tribe which make the most elaborate and most costly of sacrifices. It is quite a common sight in a Kachin village to see hanging on the fence the skull of a buffalo. In connection with all the great events of life, such as birth, marriage, industry, illness and death, the Kachins immolate the spirits most of which to their thinking are malignant in disposition and action. I purpose here to show the kind of gifts which are made at the time of the harvest festival and also I will indicate the type of sacrifice which is made to the much feared thunder and lightning spirit.

The ceremony of the harvest festival is performed in two consecutive stages; the first part occurs inside the house (usually in the house of the chief) and the second offering is made outside the house but adjacent to it. The entire rite must be completed in one and the same day.

The gifts made within the dwelling consist of three things:- First, a parcel of cooked rice made from the newly harvested paddy; second, a package containing one small dried fish, together with a piece of sprouting ginger. The preserved flesh of a mouse may be used as a substitute for the fish, and thirdly, a small quantity of liquor in a bamboo cup. These offerings are taken and are presented at the house-altar where it is customary to burn candles and incense and at the moment

of presentation the priest addresses the spirits of ancestors thus:-

O Parents and Rulers of us, here is the food which your sons and daughters of this house offer to you. They have not stolen this food as birds, rats and other creatures do. They have done their work honestly and they now bring these gifts to you with the hope that you will keep the spirit or soul in the paddy and cause it to be sufficient for all their needs.

Most of the animistic tribes of Burma believe that the paddy has a spirit or soul and if the owner fails in his obligations, the soul of the paddy may make its departure and the paddy too may fly away with it like a queenless swarm of bees.

While the above ceremony is being conducted within the house, the young men are busily engaged with the necessary preparations for the service to be held immediately out-doors. A thick bamboo post is set securely in the ground and at the middle of this pole is fitted a loosely woven bamboo tray or table, oblong in shape which serves as an altar. When completed the post is directly in the centre of the tray. In the top joint of the bamboo are placed stems of grass with white blossoms.

At either side of the central post four leaves are put on the altar. To the left side of the table and on the outer leaf which is number one, is deposited a parcel of new rice; on

number four leaf, that is the one nearest the pole, is placed a sweet and fragrant kind of rice and leaves numbers two and three receive offerings of fish and ginger or mouse and ginger. On the four leaves at the right side are offered whatever food remains, while directly in front of the central pole are presented two bamboo cups full of liquor. It will be observed that the gifts for both parts of the ceremony are practically the same. The priest on this occasion prays not to the spirits of ancestors but to the spirit of thunder and lightning. When the service has been completed all the villagers eat a common meal inside the house where the first part of the ceremony took place. It is not permissible to kill any kind of domestic animal at this time. Preserved meats of either domestic or wild animals may be used and there is no prohibition against the use of fresh meat of wild game.

The thunder and lightning spirit which the Kachins call "Mushen" is a treacherous and malicious demon, that is quite frequently propitiated by the sacrifice of a buffalo. When the lightning strikes a tree or house, whether the cultivator or householder becomes ill or not, it is necessary to make an offering to the "Mushen". When the patient is very ill and it has been determined that his illness is due to the biting attack of the Mushen, preparations are made to appease the angry demon. At the base of a bamboo clump, a temporary platform-altar is erected and adjacent to this, two stout wooden posts are fixed securely in the ground in cross-wise fashion, resembling in shape a St. Andrew's cross. To this latter structure the sacrificial buffalo

is dragged and fastened. The frightened and resisting beast is killed by a spear thrust to the heart.. The flesh of the animal is prepared by the butcher. Small bits of meat are wrapped in plantain leaves and are offered by the priest to the "Mushen".

The ceremony to the lightning spirit begins from inside the house of the person who is ill. The priest goes to the home of the sick man with the purpose of conducting the demon from the house to the place of sacrifice. He says to the Mushen that he has plenty of good food for him and thus the malignant spirit is coaxed and persuaded gradually to leave the patient and the house and to follow the priest forth to the altar where the gifts of food are spread. The demon is threatened with starvation if he should fail to follow the Seer. Eventually when the spirit has been successfully coaxed out into the open, the priest sits down in front of the altar and continues to talk to the Mushen. He addresses him somewhat as follows:-

Look! I have placed on this tree all kinds of food for you. Do not stay in the house of the man who is ill, nor in his fields. Just follow and listen to me. The banyan tree top is the dwelling place of demons and not the habitation of men. It is the place where there are various foods and it is a good residence for demons. Go and live on the banyan heights; for there you will find everything to your liking. Do not return to man's country. With man

there is nothing but poverty, famine, hunger, sickness, wickedness, destruction and death. I bring all these afflictions to you and ask from you good gifts in exchange.

At the close of this address the priest proceeds to call back the soul of the patient and the souls of all his relatives. They are commanded to leave this habitation of the demon and to return to live with man.

Addressing the souls, he cries:- "Souls arise! Collect all the good property and return to the dwelling place of man - a land of plenty." Thereupon the Seer returns to the house of the man who is ill and says that he is bringing to him all the costly and precious blessings of earth. "A great gift has come to your home - look after it. There shall be no more sickness and death for you. Eat plenty. You have no good property in the land of death. Do not look to the dead country. Turn and look only on the land of the living."

It is not necessary here to give further illustrations as to the manner in which offerings and sacrifices are made by the Kachin people. Like the other animistic races they believe that such oblations are necessary to secure the healing of their afflictions of body. It will also be observed that the religious leaders know how to employ to the full the psychological method of healing through suggestion.

In a previous chapter I have already referred to a few of the practices of the Shans with regard to the propitiation of evil spirits. When sowing and harvesting crops and when under-



taking the building of a new house, offerings are made to the spirits. Concerning house building Mrs. Milne writes, "When the chief builder, with the assistance of the wise men of the village has discovered the lucky day, he takes offerings of rice, tea, fruit and flowers and places them on a scarlet tray and lays the tray, with the offerings, under the shade of the nearest tree, invoking the spirits that live in the branches above. The food is left the whole day beside the tree; it is then removed and may be eaten." \*

In the rice fields of Shan cultivators may be seen numerous poles stuck in the ground, usually situated in the centre of the cultivated area. To these tall poles are attached offering cups in which are placed the gifts to the guardian spirit of the rice field.

Captain Enriquez writes: "The Shans themselves offer an annual sacrifice of two pigs and a buffalo to the Lake Nat, Town Nat and Market Nat of Keng Tung. The sacrifice is made on a larger scale every third year, when each man, woman and child (not excluding the Sawbwa himself) contributes one pice to expenses. Every third year also, Evil Spirits are officially expelled from Keng Tung." \*\*

There is no human sacrifice in Burma but across our border in the country which is known as unadministered British territory, where dwell the wild Wa, annual human sacrifice is made to the spirit of the rice field. As to the origin of this

\* Mrs. Milne - "Shans At Home". page 100.

\*\* Captain C. M. Enriquez, "A Burmese Lonliness" page 34.

practice the following account is related. When the Wa did not understand the art of cultivation, they went to their more civilized Chinese neighbours to purchase from them the paddy seed. The latter deceived the Wa and gave them only the husks of the paddy seed, which they planted in vain. Discouraged but determined, they returned to get more seed and this time the Chinese gave them real seed. They also advised the Wa to offer to the spirit long human hair at sowing time. On the way back to their village they captured a stranger, chopped off his head and offered the hair to the spirit. The abundant harvest which they later garnered was obtained not because of the good seed which they had sown but because of their sacrifice of a human head. Until the present time the Wa make this annual human sacrifice. They prefer a head with long hair, but if such is not available they will take any kind of head, and they will even rob a grave to get one. The neighbours of the wild Wa do not stray far from their villages when ploughing time approaches. When a head has been secured it must not be taken into the village immediately. It must stay outside the Wa community for a period of three days. The successful head hunter is happily greeted by his fellow villagers and they show their appreciation by throwing stones at his house. During the three day period when the head remains outside the village, a buffalo is slaughtered and a joyful festival is celebrated. The women make a tasty dish of eggs and fowl and feed the human skull and when they do so they wailingly say to the head, "You had eyes but you did not use them well, when you journeyed you went on the wrong road. Your

mother, wife and children you cannot see; we have great pity on you." When the three days of celebration are finished, the head is taken and offered to the spirit of the highland rice field.

PRAYING.

At the outset the question may be asked, does an animist pray? If prayer may be broadly defined as a sense of need of protection; a feeling of dependence upon supernatural aid; a request, silent or expressed, for the help of super-human power or powers, then the answer to the question is undoubtedly in the affirmative.

The Lahu as a monotheist prays in the "Bon Yeh" to G'uisha but as an animist he prays in mountains and forest glades and by streams and lakes to the spirits which inhabit nature. This distinction should be kept in mind, especially when considering the Lahu people who have some definite idea of or belief in a Supreme Being. The Buddhist Shan may experience a different religious emotion when he reverently kneels before the silent Buddha image of his temple than he does experience when he goes, as an animist, to the sacred grove and there prays and offers to the guardian spirit.

I once asked an old Lahu priest what he did when he went to his "Bon Yeh" and he told me that sometimes when he was praying in his temple all alone, his body would tremble with emotion and his face would be bathed in tears. Here was a man who seemed to be conscious of some striking religious experience through his contact with "G'uisha".

For three days previous to the community service of worship in the "Bon Yeh" the villagers have to purify themselves.

No flesh of any kind may be eaten; there must not be any sexual intercourse and all liars must refrain from deception. The "Pawku" when he opens the service makes an offering of a lotus flower and makes the following prayer:-

Mvuh du mvuh ka neh nu ya nu ya chi mave

Daw meu ga meu hui teh:

Neh nu ya n̄ ya chi ma la meu

Hkaw lu hkaw tan kaw veu la leh

Te a u Te va la!

Chi mave la peun la wai la

Kau hku chi hku, wa g'o g'a lo.

Neh chi ya chi, la meu hkaw lu hkaw tan,

Kau khu chi hku, vai leh hkaw.

Neh chi ya chi la meu hkaw lu hkaw tan,

Hkeun ti hkeun shehn bvuh g'a lu.

Apa G'ui hawn vai leh hkaw.

Neh nu ya nu, chi mave

Pan ya kati aci go la leh ka la.

Apa G'ui co g'a ga leh

Apa G'ui co ma suh co

Apa G'ui co ma na co

Mvuh to hko hta Mamo ti Mamo hkam

Neh co ya co ceh la.

G'ui co ma suh co peun leh

Neh nu ya nuhta ka la.

Apa G'ui mvuh kawmo ti kaw no shehn hawn

Baw ti Baw shehn co.

Neh nu ya nu chi ma  
 Apa G'ui co sho co g'a ga leh  
 Kaw mo ti kaw no shehn hko  
 Co nga Ha nga bvuh leh  
 Neh co ya co ceh la.  
 Kaw law kaw ti caw ga.  
 Apa G'ui co ma suh co  
 Sha co ma na co,  
 Neh nu ya nu ka ma ka vin,  
 Shu leh mvuh tu leh peu la.  
 Vinya laihpa ka pon go leh  
 Apa G'ui hawn vai leh hkaw.

This poetic form of prayer has much repetition and the literal translation of it is somewhat as follows:-

Guardian of Life! Earth's weak children  
 are all of one mind and they come  
 bringing the work of their hands as offerings.  
 They come trusting and praying:  
 All the priests are assembled.  
 These many children bring their offerings  
 And all the priests kneel and pray.  
 Father God under whom we kneel and pray  
 Fulfil thy promise to the weak children of earth  
 And please help and clothe us.  
 We want to get the Father God's life:  
 The Father God's life is an undying life  
 And is free from sickness.

As living children join us to the living  
 And golden mango tree in the living country.  
 Father God whose life is not disposed to death,  
 Help and clothe thy weak children.  
 From the living and golden spring  
 Under the living and golden pagoda of God's living Country  
 Give life to all thy weak children, Father God.  
 Through the living and spiritual birds,  
 That sit on top of the living and golden pagoda,  
 Speak and give us life.  
 We want eternal life.

Father living God, whose life is not disposed to die,  
 The sins of thy weak children - all kinds of sins -  
 Wipe or rub out to the very end and help us.  
 We want to be free from all kinds of sins:  
 Under Father God we kneel and pray.

As the temple service continues and while the holy  
 candles burn the priest again prays:-

G'ui ya pa ya Kati pfuh sheh hpa O  
 No law Apa, Apa ya Kati pfuh sheh hpa!  
 Neh nu ya nu ya,  
 Kaw hpaw ka hpaw ka lo:  
 G'ui a Apa lahti bon lahti shin peun leh  
 Neh nu ya nu, Kaw hpaw ka hpaw ka.  
 Ka ma ka vin hkapg'e ponve.  
 Mvuh lu mvuh ka neh nu ya nu ya pon ga leh  
 Awpa G'ui hawn vai leh hkaw.

Ka ma ka vin, Apa no mvuh ti hko hta

Cove shehve ba leh

Neh co ya co ceh la.

U hpu kaw to caw ga leh

U Na kaw to caw ga ve..

The translation of the above prayer is:-

Son of God, Bearer of the promise

to or from the Father!

Clothe the bodies of thy weak children.

Father God, power of glory in whom we trust,

Clothe our bodies.

Your ~~worldly~~ and weak children

want to be free from all kinds of sin.

Under God we kneel and pray.

Father, let the glory that shines in the living country

Shine upon us and give us eternal life -

White hair nine times and

Black hair nine times we want.

The custom of the "Bon teve" - blessing do - is practiced by the Lahus chiefly for two reasons, namely, to obtain help from G'uisha and to secure healing for the sick.

The Pawku may tell the villagers that G'uisha is prepared, to give blessing but he is withholding his gifts because they are failing in their obligations with regard to "Bon teve". At the call of the Pawku an entire village becomes aroused, puts aside its usual daily work and devotes itself to several days of prayerful



seeking. Though they seriously request G'uisha to bless them, the prosperity sought is of a temporal and material nature only. There seems to be little or no desire expressed for gifts of a spiritual character, to satisfy the heart and conscience. When they "Bon teve" they expect to find the everlasting food and they also hope for a rejuvenation of their physical lives, in which renewed state their white and grey hair will turn black and their shaky teeth will become firm. The real objective of their prayerful search is to discover the "Ti aw" - a kind of supernatural food, which when obtained will bring a cessation of all labour and which will make the arduous task of cultivation of crops unnecessary. In past and recent times. Lahus, acting on the advice of their priests, have been known to abandon their regular agricultural labours for periods of weeks and months with the hope of finding the "Ti aw" though the practice of "Bon teve". How sadly disillusioned many of those simple minded people have been. However, where the custom is not carried to extremes, the general effect upon the community is good; for those who sincerely seek receive some kind of compensation. On these "Bon teve" occasions a pig is killed and the whole village partakes of a common meal. In the following chapter on "Healing" we shall there show how the custom is used to secure health for those who are ill.

There is still another occasion when a Lahu resorts to this practice. A farmer, after having sown his seed, should he discover on his highland tract, a hole made by an ant-eater, has reason to fear; for it is a sign to him that he or some

member of his family will die before the year is finished. The hole is suggestive of his grave and to avoid death the cultivator must choose one of two alternatives. He may either decide to abandon his field on which he has spent many weeks of hard labour or he may choose to "Bon teve". When the latter course is followed he takes a pine cone and some sand and goes to the hole made by the Fahko-ant-eater. The pine cone represents the Fahko and the sand is his own personal substitute. He addresses the cone thus :- "To this hole which you have dug I have brought the substitute of my body, not one only but as many as the sand and thus many have died instead of me." After speaking those words he puts the cone and the sand in the hole and returns to the village, where a pig has been slaughtered. All the village feast upon its flesh and during the meal the cord-tying ceremony is performed. The elders bind the wrists of the cultivator and his family with strings, which symbolical act represents to them that their souls have now been firmly secured within their bodies and that the threatened calamity of death has passed them by.

Prayers are offered to both good and evil spirits. The aid of gods is sought when selecting a new house site. From the following prayer one would conclude that the Lahus are polytheists; for they make mention of several gods in the request which is as follows:-

"Tevau Tevala, the creator of sun and moon with whom is eternal life and power, I come questioning and requesting. If I am to be well and prosperous on

this new site bear witness to me by keeping the paddy seeds joined to each other and do not let them move or be moved. I call upon the gods of the heavens - Hpaya E, Hpaya Hpon; the gods under the waters - Upashin, Hpaya Ko and Hpaya Na and the gods under the earth - Nanhtawlan and others Ai Nan and Nanhkaima. Gods these many come to my aid; for there is no eternal life dwelling in me - - - Sha."

In case of illness if it is thought that the House Spirit has been offended, this guardian and good spirit is addressed thus:

"Sha -- a Tevau Tevala, the Ruler and Guardian of this house! Man disposed to error, neither knowing nor thinking has touched you and has transgressed or perhaps by making too much noise in the house we have offended you. Please do not punish us. We bring you the offering of these candles which are an expression of our trust in thee and we request you to have mercy upon us by taking from us sickness and evil and we ask you neither to hurt nor harm the members of this household. Grant us blessing and comfort and a plentiful supply of cattle. Tevau Tevala, please care for and look after us and continue to bless us - - Sha-a."

When the Seer appeals to the undesired lightning spirit

he prays:-

"O lightning spirit of this mountain of Kengtung! This child when going to his rice field and when his spirit was weak transgressed the will of the

lightning spirit. If you have tied him up with your chains of silver and gold, please come and slip the chains off him; if your brass and iron chains have bound him, be pleased to set him free. If his neck, head, hands, and feet are bound with your fetters, loose him and let him go. Just now we offer you a three year old white cock - eat it and be gone. This white rice is the fruit of the sick man's labour. Eat it and take these nine bellows and be gone to the distant Peking country, the original home of the iron mines and blacksmith shops."

And the medicine-man or "shepa" makes his prayer for supernatural power to help him in his healing art. He prays:-

"God who dwells in the blessed golden country of the shepas, I come to make offering. I come seeking the author of eternal life and I request you to work for me. Come down and fill me with eternal life and wisdom - the power of knowing. The god who looks at the earth and penetrates it, who looks at the mountain and understands it with piercing knowledge; who looks at the rivers, trees and rocks and thoroughly comprehends them; who understands all things that come within the range of his vision - god of eternal life, god of the understanding mind, come down and be pleased to fill me with this power of knowing."

The Lahus say that the lord of the "shepa" answers his prayer immediately; for the "shepa" is able at once to tell what is wrong with his patient. The medicine-man is given power to see the cause of the illness as plainly as if it were some surface hurt because he has received the penetrative vision of his god that can look clear through the mountain and can comprehend it all.

I have already intimated that the Kaws do not seem to have as definite an idea of a Supreme Being as either the Lahus or the Kachins. They have no "Bon Yeh" or temple where the villagers may gather as a group for worship and prayer, though every household has its own sacred altar where aid is requested for daily needs. "Ahpi mi yeh" is the Kaw name for Supreme Being. While there are some Kaws who do think of "Ahpi mi yeh" as the creator of the world, the majority of them think of "Ahpi mi yeh" as the souls of dead Kaw elders; for the souls of ancestors that live in the other world are also called "Ahpi mi yeh". The house-altar which is attached to the central post of the dwelling is called "Ahpe paw law". The Kaw word for elders is "Ahpo ahpi". When they are making offerings at the "Ahpe paw law" they address it and call upon the souls of the "Ahpo ahpi" of "Ahpi mi yeh" to descend and help them. It would therefore seem that their belief in the living souls of dead ancestors forms the basis of their conception of the supernatural. They are guardian and protective spirits, to which offerings of food are made. They have houses, wives and children but they do not cultivate. The beards of the dead elders are very long.

A Kaw prays to the great company of spirits which he meets when he steps outside the protective gateway of his village. As a cultivator he invokes divine aid when he offers to the spirit of the rice field. In his highland tract is a little shrine of thatch where he prays and asks for a prosperous harvest. As a hunter in need of food, before he starts the chase, he takes two lighted candles and sets them at the base of a tree and there invokes the spirit to crown his hunting expedition with success. Again he requests supernatural aid when he offers a goat or a dog to the demon of the forest and when he sacrifices a cock or a duck to the water spirit his appeal is for protection and healing. Even the guardian but capricious house spirit to which he makes the sacrifice of a pig, may be resentful and punitive and he must seek to re-establish himself in the gracious favour of this household nat. The evil spirit that stays by the forks of the road is requested not to follow the villagers and to placate him gifts of rice and two kinds of leaves are offered. Those spirits that are most malignant and most greatly feared are scolded, pierced with swords and driven from the community. Prayer is made to the soul that has temporarily departed from the body of a living person, when it is appealed to, coaxed and tempted to return to its body-owner. The souls of the dead are prayerfully directed and conducted by the Seer to the land of death and are requested not to come back to trouble and annoy the living. In all the many and varied activities of his life and in his contacts with the objective world, an animistic Kaw feels his own utter

helplessness to successfully contend with the stern facts of his existence. He senses his need for protection, both for his family and for his crops and his appeals are directed to secure the favour of spirits that ensure the material prosperity he desires.

The Kachins, like the Lahus, have a very definite conception of a Supreme Being to whom they pray. C. Gilhodes referring to this writes:- "I have been unable to find the origin of the name Karai Kasang; in order to try to find out its origin I have in vain addressed myself to those who know Pali, Chinese, Shan and Burmese. Consequently this word seems to be pure Kachin and to mean Supreme Being, because the Jaiwas always put it at the head of the names they give to the Superior Being. Besides, it is the meaning given to the word by Mr. Rae, an English official who governed the Kachins for fifteen years and who lived in their midst at Sinlum Kaba; 'Karai Kasang', he wrote to me, 'means Supreme Lord'".

"Rev. O. Hanson, of the American Baptist Union, also gives the same meaning to the word, because in his translation of Genesis he always renders the word "God" by Karai Kasang." \*

Karai Kasang is regarded as the creator of all things. He is even the author of evil spirits and is considered to be more powerful than the demons. He is immortal and supreme lord and ruler. He is omniscient. His nature is just, true and good. He is the provider and helper of men and he rewards goodness and punishes wickedness. Because Karai Kasang is a good spirit it

\* C. Gilhodes. "The Kachins, Rel. & Myth. p.p. 95,6.

is not necessary to make blood sacrifices to him though small gifts of rice, eggs, water and beer are offered to him.

C. Gilhodes cites a sample prayer as follows:-

"O Karai Kasang! Creator of all spirits,  
father of all men, come sit down on this  
arm chair; all the offering of the balcony  
are for thee; eat and drink what thou  
likest; ye also, great Nats, sons and grand-  
children of Karai Kasang, arrive in your  
father's company, and accept the presents  
which are attached to the columns of the  
kenrong. And now, O Karai Kasang, give unto  
us rice, buffaloes, money, etc." \*

It perhaps should be said that the above prayer was made on an occasion when the Kachin country was threatened with famine. An altar or kenrong was specially built and villagers from the surrounding district brought gifts to offer to Karai Kasang. Their dependence upon the Supreme Being is further illustrated from another quotation from the same author. "Rev. J. Geis, A.B.M.U., who knows the tribes round about Myitkyina, at the end of an article on religion which appeared in an appendix to "The Kachin or Chingpaw Language" by H.F. Hertz, D. S. P. has written, page 159: "Above and beyond all Nats to whom Kachins offer sacrifices at one time or other, they recognise the existence of one great spirit called Karai Kasang. Altars in his honour are not found in villages or houses; no

\* C. Gilhodes, "The Kachins - Religion and Myth. p.p. 102, 3, 4.



priest has been able to divine what offerings are to be made to it, but in time of great danger Nats and their offerings are forgotten and their cry goes out Karai Kasang for help, succor.

"And Mr. Hertz adds at the bottom of the same page: ' Karai Kasang existed before all things and is the Lord of the Universe.' "\*

We have already observed in the previous chapter on sacrifice, how the Kachins pray to the spirits of their ancestors and to the much feared lightning spirit. I wish now to give a few sample prayers offered to guardian and protective spirits. When the cultivator invokes supernatural blessing, the form of his appeal is somewhat as follows:-

"Spirit that dwells in the trees and rocks,  
the ruler of the jungle and watcher of the  
forest, protect our crops from being devour-  
ed by rats, insects, pigeons and thieves.  
The seed sown outside the fence and that  
which has grown among weeds, garner it all.  
Let the harvest of rice be sufficient for  
all our needs and while we eat of it, do  
not let it diminish in quantity."

And to the spirit of the sun he offers a prayer of  
thanksgiving, thus:-

"Because of your power and majesty, the  
children of men praise thee. We make  
an offering of new rice to you. Because  
of your light we have food and drink,

\* C. Gilhodes, "The Kachins, Rel. & Myth. p.p.102,3,4.

health and strength. Animals and vegetation are also benefited. You do us no harm and you demand no offering from us. We offer because we want to."

To the "Ne Sahte" or the spirit of prosperity and wealth, appeal is thus made:-

"Lord of silver and gold and owner of every kind of property. Ruler of nine earths and nine heavens who eats from a golden table and who drinks from cups of gold. Lord of the golden helmet, give life to this sick one. Cause his food to taste sweet and prolong his life. There is none greater than you and we bring an offering of an egg.

The above mentioned three spirits are kindly disposed and do not bite men. They do not demand offerings of any kind and the gifts they receive are small and trifling.

Whether they address 'G'uisha' or the spirits, their prayers are made with the hope of obtaining their hearts' desires. Though they do pray to be released from a sense of guilt, their requests are for the most part directed to secure protection and the temporal gifts of life.

HEALING.

An animist thinks that his physical ailments are due to one of three causes, namely,

1. Natural Causation.

2. Magical Causation.

3. Spiritual Causation.

With regard to the first, he uses the natural resources at hand, medicinal remedies, to secure his health and well being; in cases where magic is determined to be the cause of illness the "shepa" or medicine man is employed to effect a cure and with regard to the third, the services of the priest and seer are used to make offering and prayer to the offended spirits with the hope of re-establishing the patient in the good favour of the demons that are the cause of the illness.

Primitive man is not wholly destitute of reasoning power. The stern conditions of his environment frequently forced him to think and act quickly. There was developed in him a resourcefulness that made him the master of his immediate surroundings. Confronted with illness and disease he was driven to think out in his own crude way possible remedies of disturbing ailments. He studied the flora and fauna of his region and learned to use leaves, roots and herbs of certain plants and trees to alleviate his physical sufferings. To the more cultured, his medicinal compounds are both repulsive and ludicrous; but to his mind they are potent remedies.

For instances, the sap of certain trees and vines, mixed with the blood of a monkey is prescribed for a mother in

a condition of weakness, resulting from childbirth. For the same patient a boiled mixture is prepared and administered. It consists of chicken flesh, the hands of a black monkey, a vine sap and a chinese fruit. Immediately after the birth of a child, the mother is given a hot drink, the ingredients of which are pepper, a chinese fruit, salt and hot water. Until the completion of the child's first cycle of life—a period of twelve days—the mother is fed the best meat of a fowl. If the chicken should be of the black-boned variety, the bones must not be eaten. She must also abstain from eating vegetables. When there is congestion of the mammary glands and the mother fails to nourish her child, to start the flow of the mother's milk, Jack fruit mixed with the fluid of a parasitical plant is given. Loss of appetite is treated by the preparation of a liquid compound which is derived from tree leaves and roots which when taken internally makes the patient perspire freely. Parts of a plantain tree and another tree are boiled and the juices derived therefrom are taken to cure bodily swellings. Earth upon which a tiger or monkey has urinated is mixed with a liquid of boiled lizards. This concoction is used as a remedy for chronic cough. Sprains are cured by blood-letting and by rubbing on the wound, bear's gall and the marrow of wild goat. Eye sores are cared for by boiling the leaves of the "Isho ce" tree. These with the white of a boiled egg and a piece of silver or silver coin are wrapped together and placed on the eye. Earache is cured by the application of warm salt water and to stop a toothache part of a boiled egg and a piece of silver must be kept in the mouth. The treatment of so serious an affliction as

dysentery is a liquid mixture of cherry, quava and red lizard taken internally while the more fatal disease of cholera is treated by an intricate compound of tree bark, plantain tree juice, scrapings of a red lacquer tobacco box, bear's gall and a certain red fruit. The fluid derived from these boiled ingredients is given to the patient to drink. A concoction of pine extract, black rice, a vine, leaves of the "Huja" tree and a tree creeping plant is applied externally to facilitate the mending of broken bones. Caterpillar bite that causes bodily swelling is cured by the application of cooked rice, salt, tea leaves, a plant and a creeping vine. Snake bite is treated by tying the limb tightly above the wound and by applying to the wound a big leaf of "Lu Peh" and the roots of two other plants. When a person has been bitten by a "Taw" an embrocation is prepared from the castor oil plant, lily and a bulb resembling ginger whose flower is red and still another plant. This mixture is rubbed vigourously into the speechless patient's body. Its action effects a burning sensation and arouses the stricken man from his stupor. He is also made to drink a liquid of boiled leaves. When an open bodily wound has been sucked by the "Peufu-Hehpa Ne", sometime before noon, medicine, consisting of the pounded roots of a large fern and the leaves of two kinds of trees, must be applied to the sore. It is also deemed necessary to place leaves of the "Chehkui tu" plant at each of the four corners inside the house and a branch of it must be attached above the entrance of the house. The reason for using the leaves of the "Chehkui tu" is to ward off and prevent further attacks

of the "Peufu".

The knowledge of these native remedies is not the peculiar possession of the "shepa" or medicine man and even if he happens to be conversant with these natural cures, his special and particular province of operation is in the sphere of magical healing. Those persons who are skilled in medicine are usually elders and there is a tendency among them to keep their knowledge secret; for the art of healing is a remunerative business. I knew of a Lahu woman doctor who lived in a district where leprosy was very prevalent and it was claimed for her by certain members of her village that she actually cured leprosy. From my personal observation over a period of years I do not think that the claim was ever substantiated; but no doubt her treatment of lepers at least retarded and temporarily suspended the progress of the disease. Her concoction which consisted of roots and herbs caused the patient to perspire very violently, with the result there oozed from all the pores of the body a black perspiration. This potent treatment left the leper very weak but it seemed to arrest the disease.

Bear's gall is perhaps one of the most used medicines and it is a remedy in which they have great faith. The gall of a python is also a very much coveted prize; for it, too, is frequently employed to cure various ills. Leopard and tiger bones are eagerly purchased by Chinese traders. Three and three-quarter pounds weight is sold for one pound sterling. The bones when ground to powder make a very desirable and costly medicine. Fortunate is

the hunter who bags a deer with antlers in velvet. A large pair of soft antlers may secure for him from seven to ten pounds sterling. Chinese purchase such deer horns for medicinal purposes. In the absence of quinine, the Lahus use a weed the leaf of which is very bitter and it is said to be a very good cure for malaria. For malarial fever they also use the gall of a bear mixed with a Western patent medicine, "Pain killer". The same mixture is given to ponies suffering from cholic. The dried intestine of a porcupine is cut up and put in a pony's grain to cure it of a shying disposition. Ponies suffering from chill at which time there streams from the nostrils a white mucus, are cured by means of an inhalant which consists of a burning rag in which are wrapped chillies and tobacco. Blood-letting and cauterization are another two means of curing pony ills. In addition to the above described treatment of disease, another method which consists chiefly of rubbing and massaging the bones and muscles is quite generally practised with good results for the alleviation of pain and suffering.

Let us now consider the magical causation of illness and its cure. We have already explained the Lahu practice of black magic or "Ne pi hp fuh dave" which is the principal method used for inflicting an enemy with sudden and violent pain. Either a piece of leather or paper or a stick of bamboo is by magical means caused to enter the abdominal region or the chest cavity. Consequently sudden and severe stomachic pains and respiratory troubles are the resultant effects of the entrance of these

extraneous substances into the body. When a man believes himself to be the victim of black magic, he calls in the "shepa" or medicine man to heal him. The messenger who goes to engage his services must take with him a cup of rice and two candles to present to him. When the medicine man arrives at the house of the patient, he lights a candle and begins to pray to the god of the "shepas" for power to cure. His dependence upon supernatural wisdom and strength is publicly acknowledged and his appeal is believed to be immediately answered; for internal obstructions are laid bare before his piercing vision and he is enabled to get at the root of the trouble. When a fee of Rupees three has been paid, the shepa lights a candle and puts it in his mouth and holds it between his teeth which is a demonstration of his power over fire. He then examines the patient in the region of his pain and having done so he suddenly bites the sick man's skin and removes from the patient the pain-causing bamboo or leather. Whatever is extracted by him is thrown into the fire and burned. Sometimes the patient is healed immediately while at other times the illness continues. The activities of the "Shepa" do not seem to be strictly confined to cases of sickness of magical causation; for occasionally he is called to treat patients whose illness is considered due to both natural and spiritual causes. However, in whatever circumstances or condition he employs his healing art, mysterious magic, wonder and jugglery seem to be its characteristic features. Acute indigestion resulting from improper diet is cured by his magical biting. His bite



extracts from the body of the patient the portion of indigestible food and with the removal of the cause of illness health is re-established. He cures serious cases of nose-bleed by giving the afflicted person a cup of water to drink, upon which he has magically blown. An adept medicine man employs the powers of suggestion when plying his healing art. He inspires his patient with the belief that he is the medium through which supernatural healing power is communicated. His diagnosis of disease must always be correct because to his divinely inspired and penetrative vision all things internal and hidden lie revealed. For the reason that he relates his healing art to the supernatural, he could be rightly classed as a faith-healer. In fact he is considered to be one of the three religious leaders of the community and though he does not have the rank of a priest, he would not be judged incapable of performing priestly functions.

That most forms of illness and disease have a spiritual causation is a fundamental belief of animism. This is the sphere in which the priest and seer operate to secure the healing of the sick, by means of divination, prayer, offerings and sacrifice.

A Lahu in a condition of prolonged physical weakness is said to be in a state of "Awki nuve". Nothing he eats tastes sweet to him-"Ca ma meh daw ma meh"-eat not sweet drink not sweet" is his way of saying that the keen edge of his appetite is lost. When he goes to consult the priest, he takes with him an offering of a pair of candles, a little meat and a length of white cloth.

The "Pawhku" then prays to "G'uisha" thus:-

O Father! What is the matter with  
your child I do not know. His food  
and drink are not sweet to his  
taste. You have a white spirit: your  
spirit can go everywhere and it is  
able to see. Has his soul flown away  
or how is it? I make offerings to  
you of gold and silver candles,  
lotus flower and white cloth.

These I place on your silver and  
gold table.

At this moment the priest causes his own soul  
to go out to the spirit world to discover the cause of his  
patient's illness. After a brief interval he announces to the  
afflicted one that his case is either "Awha hpawve"-  
departure of the soul-or "awki nuve" loss of strength and  
appetite. If it is the former, the ceremony of calling back the  
soul has to be performed but in the case of the latter, the  
patient has to "Bon teve". The custom of "Bon teve" to secure  
healing is a very prevalent practice among the Lahu people.  
The person who is ill is obliged to supply a pig which his  
friends slaughter, prepare and feed to all the members of the  
village. Just before the community partakes of the feast the  
priest prays to "G'uisha" as follows:-

Father, Son of God! To-day your child

is weak. This year make his strength  
firm. Take this pig and do so. After  
to-day cause him to be strong and  
from your exalted place let help  
come.

After this brief prayer they partake of a common meal and when they have finished feasting, the elders take cords and wind them round the wrists of their sick friend and as they do so they wish him well..

It is believed that illness results from the departure of the soul from the body. The soul may make its flight from the body when a person is suddenly and hastily awakened from sleep or when he is frightened by the unexpected appearance of a tiger in his path. When it is determined that a soul has taken flight, it is necessary to call the spirit back at once. For this ceremony a young yellow hen and the cover of a cane basket are used. White and black cloth are spread over the basket lid and in it are placed a cup of rice, a cup of salt and two chop-sticks which food is regarded as a tempting meal for the soul that is requested to speedily return. A pair of girl's ear-rings and a twisted cord of many colours are also deposited in the basket. After these preparations the ceremony of calling back the soul begins, usually outside the village gate. The Seer looking towards the jungle calls, "Ha O! Kaw la u - Kaw la u" - "O Soul! Come back-come back". He then proceeds to the house of the patient and addresses the departed soul at

greater length,as follows:-

O soul do not run away.The country of sickness and death is not your dwelling place and there you have nothing to eat nor have you any friends.Do not sit down and make friendship with strangers but speedily return and be a companion with strong and worthy men.This house is full of children and elders.Return and under this house let there be a large and plentiful supply of cattle. In the dead country there may be ferns with nine leaves;but those nine leaves are not as beautiful as one white or silver leaf in our land of the living. In the country of death there may be different kinds of food;but these are not to be compared with a white bowl of rice and a cup of crystal-like water which are ours in the land of the living.Soul,come back!

After a pause the seer confidently asks the waiting company,"ha Kaw la peu la"-has the soul returned?- and they all reply in unison,"Kaw la peu"- it has returned.Thereupon the elders present,bind the wrists of the patient with cords which is a visible intimation to him that his soul has come back to reside in his body and to rejuvenate him with newness of life

and health. The Lahus say that even though a person is very sick and even nigh unto death when his soul returns to the body and when the cords have been wound about his wrists, he recovers very quickly, even if he does not receive any medicinal remedy. On some occasions, however, the sacrifice of a yellow hen is not sufficiently efficacious in wooing back the runaway soul and it is found to be necessary to sacrifice a pig in order to coax the soul to return. When this additional placation is performed the whole village partakes in a feast and the elders execute the cord-tying ceremony.

There is a general procedure which is followed by both priest and people in times of illness. The sick man goes to the priest to have him discover which spirit he may have offended and when he goes he takes with him in a basket, two yards of white cloth, four candles, two pond lilies, wrist cords, a cup of popped rice and two miniature paper figures of men. The priest receives these gifts and sets them by the "Tevala" which is the sacred shrine in his house, at which time by divination and prayer he attempts to discover the particular spirit which has been offended. When he prays he says:-

There is no eternal life abiding in man.

Tevau Tevala, you are the author of eternal life and in the name of God this man who is ill brings to you these offerings and he comes beseeching the covenant keeping God.

He comes also to inquire from you-the God

of the mountains and valleys, the  
God whose vision pierces the heavens  
and the earth and who understands all  
things-which spirit, if any, has been  
offended.

God answers his prayer in the following manner.

If the patient has offended the spirit of the mountain, the priest is given the vision of a bush; should it be the demon of the river that has been transgressed, he sees, as in a trance, running water; if it is the rock spirit that is responsible, he dreams of a rock and should it be the spirits of ancestors that have been disrespected and neglected, to his mind a picture of village elders is presented. Whatever the revelation that is vouchsafed to him, he makes it known to his patient. If ancestor spirits have been offended, the afflicted person must offer a pig in order to obtain the healing of his body. Should his illness be due to the instability of his soul, which may be deliberating as to whether it will remain with him or make its departure to the spirit world, the priest orders the relatives of the sick man to take a plank of wood and tells them to lay it across a stream to form a bridge or it may be laid lengthwise of some public path. Leaf cups to hold rice and candles, paper flags and paper figures of men are placed at either end of the plank and strings are stretched along and above it. The priest then prays that the soul or life of his patient may

be as unending as the river and as enduring as the soul of a rock and when the prayer is finished he takes the strings from the bridge to the house of his patient and binds his wrists and thus his healing is secured. The two paper figures of men which the Lahus call "Tokeu" are stuck together with wax and are suspended over the sick man's head. One of the figures represents the soul of the man who is ill, and the other the God given soul of a new man. The two when united become one and thus the human span of life is lengthened. In connection with the "Bon teve" ceremony, it will be observed from a study of the "Pawhku's" prayer that the killing of a pig is one of the means by which new life is imparted to the patient. There seems to exist in the minds of the Lahus the idea that the soul of the slaughtered pig is released to join and to supplement the soul of the sick man whose illness may have been caused by a shortened soul. When his short soul is supplemented, the physical energies are renewed.

Healing both for the individual and for the community is obtained by exorcism of evil spirits. If the violent spirit of demon possession is allowed to remain in the body to devour the intestines and liver, death is inevitable. To secure the healing of the possessed person, the devil must be driven out immediately and every repulsive and pain-inflicting device is used to cause its hasty retreat. When the demon is successfully exorcised, the man comes to himself and recovers his health, though for a period of weeks his body continues in

a weakened condition, as the result of the severe beating methods of exorcism.

The health of the whole community is secured by means of the annual ceremony of exorcism. With spears, dahs, gun-firing and loud shouting the evil spirits are driven from every house and are excitedly pursued beyond the precincts of the village and ropes are placed above the main gateways to prevent their re-entrance.

The Kaws do not seem to understand nor use native remedies as do their neighbours the Lahus. They do employ roots and leaves to cure their illnesses but their most commonly used drug is raw opium, which they cultivate on their highland tracts. For headache or stomach-ache and for most every pain and affliction, opium is called into service. A personal friend of mine, a Kaw chief, who is an inveterate opium smoker, told me that as a young man he suffered from lung hemorrhage. He consulted many native doctors and tried all of their medicines in vain. At last he was cured by taking opium. Healing by blood-letting and by application of medicine to the open sore is practised and cures by cauterization are effected. For the latter a sharp-pointed iron rod is heated in the fire and with this the skin is pierced in the region of the pain. This is a crude and severe method of treatment of disease but it is very frequently an effective means of healing. Primitive man is a rugged and hardy creature and he is capable of enduring a great deal of physical discomfort, especially if he has hope of



healing. Fasting is still another way to health, and massage is generally practised. Small-pox patients and lepers are segregated and dangerously insane people are shut up in a cage in the forest. Healing by immolation of the evil spirits that are the cause of many of their illnesses is a practice of almost daily occurrence. Runaway souls are recalled to re-inhabit the bodies that they have vacated and which have become ill because of their departure.

Similar diseases and like means of healing obtain among the Kachins. Like other animists they believe that most all forms of illness are caused by evil spirits and that the placation of those demons is necessary to secure healing. When a Kachin is afflicted with madness it is their custom to sacrifice pigs and dogs. C. Gilhodes writing of this custom says:- "In cases of madness the Kachins of our time offer the same sacrifices; to Lep Mu Lep Mai or to his sister Pilom Pilai, they always offer pigs and dogs; as to goats and he-goats, sometimes they sacrifice them, sometimes they dress them with the clothes of the mad person and chase them far into the forests"\*.

In Kengtung town one year we had a rather serious outbreak of plague. Many of the Shans think that plague was introduced to Kengtung by Government doctors who give inoculations for the disease, free of cost. A number of Shans died during the epidemic and the ravages of the outbreak were very disturbing to the customary peaceful calm of the community,

\* C. Gilhodes. The Kachins Rel. & Myth. p. 61.

with the result that the magical services of the Buddhist priests were called into action in order to stem the flood of disease. On this occasion I saw the yellow-robed priests one day, with bamboo sticks in their hands, digging holes in the ground of the main road which leads from the Government hospital to the open paddy flats. By this means they exorcised the spirits of the death-dealing plague and drove them under ground. The Shans have a rather high form of civilization and they have some very good ideas about health and sanitation. Still they are a very superstitious people and though they are devout Buddhists, their old animistic beliefs and customs still constitute a very considerable part of their religious thought and action.

One evening when I was visiting a Buddhist temple a Shan woman entered and reverently knelt before the large and newly gilded image of Buddha. Prayer was offered by a priest, while a rope of flax which she had brought, was allowed to burn. The burden of the woman's prayer was for her son whom she had left at home and who seemed to be incurably ill. We failed to ascertain the relationship between the burning flax and the sick man. The woman herself could not inform us. Perhaps the thought that lay behind the symbolic act was that the illness had been transferred from the son to the flax to be destroyed and consumed by fire. Mrs. Milne refers to the question of healing and says: "If a man feels ill and the wise men and the women cannot cure him with their medicines his friends make as much noise as possible by the beating of gongs and the clashing of cymbals. Spirits hate a noise, so if a great din is made they may fly away.-----"

If however he grows worse and dies, his death is the consequence of his previous wicked deeds, because of them the evil spirits have been allowed to kill him."\*

Primitive man by means of medicine, magic and immolation, hoped to recover and maintain his health. He early discovered that the state of the soul or mind had a definite relation to the body; that the condition of the soul affected the physical health; that an inward strength contributed to an outward sturdiness and that spiritual vigour was conducive to physical robustness.

\* Mrs. Milne, "Shans at Home", p. 110.

DYING.  
Burial and After.

There is a place to which the dead go. The Lahus call it "Suh mvuhmyi"-the country of the dead. When a Lahu man dies a lighted candle is placed at his head. The priest and seer or two elders who know the dialogic death chant take up positions beside the corpse and begin to sing. The poetically phrased song asks and answers questions. Starting with the creation of the world by "G'uisha", its theme also makes references to the fall of man when he ate the seeds of disease and death. When the two men have finished their chanting, they make their address to the dead but before doing so they recall the soul of the deceased and speak to it thus:- "The food and clothing in the living country are not good, neither is the land of the living a good dwelling place. In the country of the dead the food is sweet, the clothing is good and it is a fine place in which to live". They now turn to the corpse to instruct the deceased. The instruction of the dead is called "Yakaw mave" which means to teach the way, or to direct a traveller concerning an unknown road. The seer speaks to the corpse as if he were talking to a living person and says:-

You are not the only one that has to die.

The sun and moon as well must die. The

friends that you have left behind they,

too, must die. Do not turn around to look

at your wife and children but take to

road and go. After you have completed one

stage of the journey, turn to the right. The road to the left leads to "Mawnaho"- place of destruction. The road to the right, even though it is a narrow path, leads to "G'uisha". Before you get to the G'uisha country you will enter a village of the dead which will be your temporary dwelling. While there be obedient to the chief and listen well to the words of the elders. As others work and cultivate, you do likewise and if you do so you will eventually get to see G'uisha's place.

While this service is being conducted inside the house by elders, younger men have been engaged killing a pig. A rope is fastened round the snout of the dead animal and when the human corpse is carried outside of the house, the bearers halt and the loose end of the rope which is tied to the pig is placed in the hand of the deceased and he is supposed to lead the pig to the country of the dead.

Lahu cemeteries are usually a great distance from their villages. On the pathway somewhere between the village and the cemetery two "Baceh" are set up. A "Baceh" consists of two crossed logs of wood which in shape resemble a multiplication sign, and it represents the boundary between the living and the dead. When going to and when returning from

the grave the mourners pass under it. All who have participated in the burial service, upon their return to the village, must go directly to the house of the deceased. Upon their arrival there they dip leaves in a water jug and throw them behind them in the direction of the grave. They also wash their hands with water. Whoever should go directly to his own house, without observing the above mentioned ceremony, would be in danger of having the ghost of the deceased follow him to do him some injury. While in the house of mourning, the seer calls back the souls of those who went to the grave. His words of entreaty are somewhat as follows:-

O Souls come back. Do not go with the  
deceased to the country of death.

In the land of the dead there is  
neither food nor clothing, neither is  
there any dwelling place. It is a  
locality of illness and suffering.

Abide in the land of the living  
where there is plenty of food and  
clothing and where there is health  
and happiness. O souls, return!

After this appeal cords are tied around the wrists  
to keep the returned souls within their bodies.

The corpse is wrapped in white cloth and if this is  
not done, the relatives are not satisfied. Money is placed both  
in the mouth and in the armpit, hidden as it were, so that the

door-keeper who admits the deceased into the spirit-world, may not be able to rob him of his money. The Lahus seldom bury their dead in coffins. It is their custom to wrap the corpse in either a mat or a blanket and bury it in a grave only a few feet in depth. The grave site is chosen by throwing an uncooked egg and the spot on which it cracks open is dug to receive the corpse. If the deceased is a woman, on top of her grave are placed the following articles: Smoking pipe, dah, carrying basket and water-jug, while on a man's grave, his bow and dah are deposited. Whatever property is set on the grave, is placed there in a destroyed condition. Because the things offered are for the dead, articles in perfect condition would be considered 'not good.' The same idea pertains with regard to the food offering to the deceased, for it is the foul parts and the intestines of the pig that are fed to the dead. The bereaved family provide a pig for the funeral feast in which the entire village participates. There is some trace of ancestral worship among the Lahus, which is indicative of a distinct Chinese influence. Wherever ancestral worship obtains, the Lahus make gifts of good articles of food to the spirits of dead ancestors.

Among the Lahu Shi I found the following funeral customs. When a Lahu-Shi woman dies she is buried the day after her death. At time of death a gun is fired three times to call home the cultivators from their hill farms. On the burial day the villagers must drink water three times and continue to do so for three days. On the thirteenth day after burial the soul

of the deceased returns, presumably to be fed, so on that day a pig must be killed and part of its flesh is fed to the returned soul. On this occasion the seer goes to the grave and calls the soul and when he returns to the village, he puts on top of a little bamboo table, a small dish of cooked pork, a cup of whisky and a dish of rice. A miniature house is set up, "Hpu yeh shi yeh"-silver and gold house- it is called. The small structure is a symbol of the dwelling-place of the deceased. The seer says to the soul, "hkadeh ca hkadeh daw" which means eat and drink well. The Lahus say that if they failed to make this offering, the souls of their dead would return in the form of birds and mice to devour their rice and in other forms to destroy their cattle and to cause illness in the village.

If a child of the deceased should become ill, it is necessary to make an offering of a female pig. Part of the flesh is mixed with rice and the mixture is poured into a bamboo vessel and is offered to the spirit of the dead father, at which time the spirit is thus questioned:-"Have you or have you not bitten this child? If you have bitten him, please make him well again." If the child recovers, another gift of a suckling pig is made at the "Hpu yeh shi yeh".

The Lahus are capable of deep human affection and they mourn the loss of their relatives that are taken from them through death. They do not fear a human corpse but they are tremendously afraid of the soul that inhabited the body of the deceased, for through death it has been released, to



become, perchance, a ghost of evil disposition. I have known of Lahu young men seeking to be excused from their duty of watching the school compound on the night of the day one of their school-mates was buried and the reason was that they were afraid they might see his wandering ghost returning to the dormitory. Souls of those who die of fatal accidents and souls of mothers who die in child-birth become very malicious spirits which are very much feared.

The burial customs of the Kaws differ somewhat from those of the Lahus. With the possible exception of a few of the more prosperous families, all classes of Kaw are buried according to the same custom. Death is a great equaliser. However, there are very definite prohibitions with regard to those who die as the result of fatal accidents or from abnormal causation. The unfortunate persons who are killed by tigers, mauled by bears and who are fatally wounded by falling trees, are not brought home to the village but are buried at once in the jungle. However, if the relatives of such an unlucky individual wish for him a normal burial, the body must be kept for a period of three or four months, until the seer has had time to consult with and offer to the spirits. Under ordinary circumstances a corpse is not kept; but occasionally a dead body may be kept in the house for months or even a year. Wealthy families who may desire to make large sacrifices for the deceased are compelled by force of circumstances to keep their dead for long periods. Where several buffaloes have to be slaughtered and many rites performed, such burials are obliged to wait for months. One reason for the

delay is that the villagers are busy with their daily work, such as the sowing and harvesting of their crops from which they cannot conveniently turn aside. When a corpse is kept it is preserved in a very well made wooden coffin which is hewn with an axe from the trunk of a huge tree. The trunk is cut lengthwise in two equal halves and when each section is "dug out" one part forms the main body of the coffin and the other section, the lid or cover. Since each is a duplicate of the other, the two sections fit together very perfectly. The coffin in which the corpse has been enclosed is set up on tall posts inside the house. One end of the bamboo drain pipe is fitted into the bottom of the casket, while the other end is stuck in a hole in the ground under the house and by this means they are enabled to keep a dead body for an indefinite period of time.

The body is well dressed with the very best of clothes and after the corpse has been properly clothed, it is wrapped additionally with yards of other material. By so doing the soul is well dressed for its future existence. Burial clothing is kept in preparation long before death. When a corpse is borne from the village to the cemetery, neither young nor old must look at the coffin for the reason that the souls of idle and curious onlookers may be disposed to depart from their bodies and to follow after the deceased.

Those who have "Myicha Ne" and those not having "Myicha Ne" are buried in separate places. Persons who die of small-pox and leprosy are not buried as those who die of ordinary diseases.

They are not regarded as good people and their souls in the other world have different abodes from those who have lived and died normally. Upon returning from the cemetery no one must look backwards towards the graveyard, lest he sees the ghost of the deceased. Care also must be taken not to step on foot prints. The person who steps on the foot marks of others may, perchance, be treading on the footprints of a spirit and whoever should do so or whoever should see the dead man's ghost, would be in danger of losing his own soul, for it would probably flee away from his body and leave him to suffer the dire consequences.

The articles which are placed on the graves of Kaws are not deposited in a destroyed condition. If the deceased is a male, his pipe, tea-cup and umbrella hat are presented so he may have the use of them in the spirit-world, while in the case of a woman, some of the things that she was accustomed to use in life and which afforded her pleasure are sent with her into the other world.

For the dead and also for a feast for the villagers, the bereaved relatives kill fowls, pigs and buffaloes. A pony is set free at the grave, so that the soul of the deceased may have it to ride to his new spiritual home. His highland fields, as an inheritance are divided and a portion of them, a very small section, is reserved for him. However, whatever is presented to the dead must pass through the hands of the seer, for without his aid and services, no matter how many things are given to the dead, the deceased could never receive them. The seer is the only living

person whose soul is capable of entering into the world of souls. Seers of real ability and skill are able to offer to the dead, buffaloes to the number of three but such seers at the present time are very few. For both rich and poor, the burial services are the same, with the exception that the offerings to the rich are more numerous and costly.

The Kachins conduct the most elaborate funeral services, during which time many days are spent, making sacrifices of several buffaloes. The seer addresses the dead with words like these:-

The time for your death has arrived.  
 As the horns of the buffalo harden  
 and fall off, so you have grown old  
 and have fallen away. At the beginning  
 of time, before the trees had leaves  
 and before there was misty dew, because  
 man was disposed to disease and death,  
 so now man must sicken and die. Go to  
 the place of illness and death and do  
 not look back and do not speak. Though  
 you come near to our house do not call  
 out. We do not regard you as living man.  
 Go to the death place of your parents  
 and ancestors; for you are no longer a  
 living person; you are a dead man. In  
 the world to which you are going, sand

is rice and weeds are paddy. The leaves of the trees will be your clothing. Begone and take with you illness and death. These bullocks are the gifts of your sons, the buffaloes are offered by your daughters and the fowls are given by others. Take all these gifts and be gone. The seeds of disease and death are yours; but the non-destructive seeds are for us living men. Because you did not get to live for three generations, you have died; but we have permission to live for three generations. We are not ill, neither are we disposed to die.

When the seer makes this address, he sits with dah and gun under his feet while in his hand he holds a spear. He calls upon the deceased to behold him and says:-

Look! In my hand is a spear and under my feet are a dah and gun. You are not able to destroy me. I am not afraid of you. Go to the death-chamber of your ancestors and be sure not to miss the road. There are many fork-roads: take the tenth turning; for that leads to the dwelling of your ancestors. When you get

to the river, you will meet your father-in-law and in the paddy field you will see your mother-in-law pulling weeds. In your future home there are mosquitoes as big as old white fowls and biting insects as large as buffalo horns. If any living persons follow you, prohibit them and if dogs want to follow you, drive them back; for if you do not cause them to return, you will not arrive at the abode of the dead.

When the inheritance of the deceased is divided, only the poor and useless property is given to the dead man and all the good articles are blessed for the use of the living. The meal of rice and curry that is prepared for him is not salted and the clothes which he is requested to take with him are poor in quality. Resuming his address the seer says:-

As you have come to destruction take these destroyed properties which are suited to your needs. Our goods are not disposed to decay.

He utters these words while looking in the direction of the jungle. When he turns around and is about to return home he addresses the living and says:-

Whoever you are do not follow the deceased.

Are you not afraid of this dead man?

Hurry up and come: follow after me.

Having said this, he starts for home and all the villagers accompany him, with the exception of those who have been asked to remain behind to watch the grave. The grave watchers when they get hungry fire a gun to make known their needs and their friends in the village answer in like manner. Should the villagers delay, the grave watchers fire off guns repeatedly. Those who take the food, fire guns at intervals of every thirty yards until the cemetery is reached and upon their arrival at the grave a constant shooting of guns is commenced. The young men make of the occasion a happy time of playfulness, as they keep firing at trees in the vicinity of the grave.

The Seer's final word of exhortation is given to the deceased when he presents him with a lump of charcoal and some rice flour, while he says:-

Take this charcoal and wash it with water.

If it does not turn white, do not return it to us. Come back when it is white. Take this rice flour and sow it in your high-land fields. If it brings forth fruit, come back; if it does not bear fruit, do not return here.

Over the grave a house is built which the Kachins call a "lup". It is conical in shape and is built with long wooden poles. The lup when finished resembles a huge heap prepared

for bonfire. Around the base a trench is dug. The brother-in-law of the deceased and he alone may place a flag at the head of the grave, while the son-in-law may put one at the foot of the grave. Relatives and friends may set flags in any other positions about the grave, as many as they wish, but at the head and foot the above mentioned immediate relatives only may do so.

The Kachins do not preserve their dead. Burial usually takes place immediately after death, but on some occasions when relatives have to come several days' journey, the funeral may be delayed for a week or until their arrival. Though burial takes place at once, a future date is appointed, at which time the relatives and friends assemble to make offering to the spirit of the deceased. In the case of a ruler, the time fixed for offering and celebration may be from six to twelve months after his death. On the appointed day relatives arrive from far and near and bring with them bullocks, buffaloes and fowls. Those who come from great distances bring silver instead of animals. The beasts of sacrifice are very numerous and the occasion is one of much feasting. The services of the seer are employed and he addresses the soul of the dead chief, after the manner I have already mentioned. He tries to comfort the soul of the deceased ruler by telling him that he is not the only one that has to die. The Seer and his assistants are very well remunerated for their conduct of the ceremonies; for on such occasions he receives the gift of either a pony or a buffalo and the butcher is paid three or four rupees.

A prominent feature of the obsequies is the dance.



At the actual time of burial and months later when the final obsequies are performed, dancing, under the direction of two skilled leaders, who are remunerated for their services, is the order of the day. Morning, afternoon and night, during the three-days' period of the final celebrations, are devoted to dancing. The leaders hold long lances in their hands as they begin their rythmical stepping within the house of the deceased. They are followed by a company of excited young men as they make their exit to continue the dance around the house, which they pretend to destroy. By dancing they express their devotion for the deceased and they drive away or display their mastery over the evil spirits which they fear. Much excited shouting and shooting of guns contribute to dispel the demons.

Only the chiefs and the rich can afford these expensive funerals and therefore the death of a poor Kachin is not celebrated to the same extent as that of his chief. However, even for the poor, one buffalo, two or three pigs and a few fowls must be sacrificed. With reference to the number of animals to be offered the seer determines by his method of divination. The exploded and burnt embers of a bamboo joint reveal to him what the required number is and the bereaved family concerned must obey in detail his supernaturally revealed instructions. If for any reason they should fail to do as bidden, the seer would refuse to conduct the funeral services and place a fine upon them. Poor families are sometimes compelled to borrow money in order to secure the sacrificial animals, very

small portions of which are fed to the soul of the defunct and to the spirits of ancestors. At other times the funeral obsequies are postponed until the bereaved family is more prosperously situated.

The bodies of women who die in child-birth are burned in a deep ravine, together with all their possessions. The souls of such women become malicious spirits called "Sawns", which are greatly feared and thus scrupulous care is taken to burn all clothing and jewelry, so that the wicked "sawns" will have no occasion to return in search of previously owned property. The house in which such a death occurs is destroyed, unless the family redeems the soul of the deceased. If the soul is redeemed through sacrifice of a buffalo, the corpse is buried according to regular custom and the soul is sent rejoicing on its way to the abode of ancestors and only the room of the house in which the woman died has to be destroyed and rebuilt. Lunatics and those who die violent deaths are not buried in coffins and they are not honoured with the usual funeral rites. The soul of lunatics cannot be redeemed but the soul of those who die of fatal accidents or of those who are killed in war may be redeemed and sent to live happily with the spirits of ancestors. "When a hunter dies it is customary to lay his weapons with him in his coffin. This is done because after his death the ghost of his victims block the way and he has to scare them off. This curiously enough, does not apply to a man who has killed another. The ghost of the one who perished is

said to have received such a fright that nothing could ever induce it to go near the ghost of the one who triumphed." \*

As regards the Shan burial customs there are just a few particular things to note. Since the Shans are a more highly civilised people than the hill tribes their funeral rites and practices are more ornate. They have the same fear as the Kachins with regard to death resulting from child birth. The corpse instead of being buried in a coffin, is wrapped in a bamboo mat. They greatly fear the return of the ghost of the deceased. When the coffin of an unmarried woman is borne to the grave it is purposely bumped against a post or a tree; for by so doing it is hoped that she will not have the misfortune of living without a husband in the next world. A person killed by lightning is buried in a standing position. An earthenware pot is placed over the head and face while its rim rests on the shoulders of the corpse.

Mrs. Milne, referring to the attitude of the Shans towards death, makes what I think is a perfectly correct observation, when she says, "There is no great fear of death; they all feel that they have already lived and died so often. Death and its mystery is not talked of in a whisper but it is a favourite topic of discussion in Shan homes." \*

The animistic Lahus, Kaws and Kachins have no fear of a corpse but they do have decided fears with regard to the ghost-soul that is in some mysterious way associated with and related to the body of the deceased.

\* Gazetteer of Upper Burma and The Shan States. p. 428

\* Mrs. L. Milne - "Shans At Home" p. 89

No treatise on animism would be complete without a discussion on the animistic conception of the soul and I purpose at this point to give consideration to this subject under the following three divisions:-

- 1.The Nature and Disposition of the Soul.
- 2.Its life in union with the living body.
- 3.Its life as a distinct entity after the death of the body.

In Lahu, an equivalent expression for death is "Sha leh peu", which means "breath finished" so that a dead man may be called a breath-finished person, an individual who has breathed his last. But the soul passes out from the body as a breath. The breath of a living person is sometimes seen to pass from the mouth, ascend and disappear, so the soul as a breath is disposed to speedily vanish. It may be seen for a moment and it is gone the next. Its agility and quickness of movement seem to be outstanding characteristics. It is also conceived to be a shadow, wind and white sheet but frequently assumes the same form and likeness to the body of the person in which it lives or has lived. If a soul bearing the likeness of a person who is very ill, is seen hovering about his house that is taken as a certain indication that the patient is sure to die very soon. When a Lahu came to me on one occasion to report the theft of a calf which had occurred at night, I asked him if he either heard or saw the thief, to which he replied in the negative. Then I asked him if the village dogs barked and did he hear them. He said that the dogs

were greatly disturbed and made much noise by their prolonged barking. Continuing to question him I asked why he did not get up, push open his door and have a look to find out what was going on. He replied by saying that he did not get up in the night any more, for the last time he had arisen in the night and when he looked towards the end of the village he saw a ghostly figure, clothed in white. He observed that when the ghost-soul used his hand to scratch his cheek, sparks of fire issued forth. The sight had struck fear into his heart. That these ghost-souls bear human resemblance is further illustrated from an interesting incident which transpired in a Lahu shi village of my acquaintance. The community had adopted the christian faith and had been under the care and instruction of a Karen pastor by name of Aw Tu; but when the village chose to cultivate opium which the preacher forbade, trouble ensued. The village reverted to its animistic practices and Aw Tu left the village and shortly afterwards died. After an interval of months or perhaps a year or two, a young man in the village began to see visions and dream dreams. In his dreams he repeatedly saw, as if in human form, the ghost-soul of the old pastor Aw Tu. He reported his experiences to the village elders who interpreted the visions to be a call from God. The community abandoned its opium cultivation and returned to the christian fold.

The Shans say that for three days after death the soul is formless and afterwards it may assume a human or a spirit form, while it is the idea of the Kaws that the soul

after death, for a temporary period, adopts an animal likeness.

That souls are conceived to be substantial materials beings there can be little doubt. Lest the souls of the living be shut up in the coffin, at the grave the lid is lifted to let the souls out and before the corpse is deposited in the casket, straw is burned in it to drive out any souls of the living that might be lurking there. A Shan corpse is dressed with the front of the garment to the back for it is said that the soul makes its exit from the rear of the body. Existing as a separate entity apart from the body it requires both food and clothing. That it is conceived of as having a material body of some kind, is observed from their custom of strewing ashes on the door-step, the last thing to be done before retiring at night. If the soul should return to the house his footprints would be seen among the strewn ashes. I have already mentioned that mourners returning from the cemetery are very careful not to step in the footmarks of others for fear they might be treading on the footprints of a demon. Returning souls are sometimes heard groaning as they bear on their backs a heavy load of rice and the restlessness of the fowls and the barking of the dogs that hear and see them, announce their coming. On occasions they are heard turning over the empty curry bowls. Some souls and especially those that become malicious and evil spirits, are beaten and driven. They are susceptible to both pain and fear and to avoid being pierced by tiger's claws and teeth, they conceal themselves and keep moving from one part to another of

the possessed person's body. Guns are fired and loud noises are made to make the soul afraid. Certain things are thought to be repulsive and these are employed to make exorcism successful. The soul of a corpse while it is still in the house is kept near the fire in order to keep it warm and it has also been observed that souls are sometimes seen as if in playful mood.

With reference to the second of these considerations, namely, the life of the soul in union with the living body as psyche, it is the belief of these animistic peoples, that the soul is present in the body at the time of birth, but as to how it enters the body and concerning the precise time of its entrance, they have no idea. The Shans are a possible exception for they are of the opinion that the soul enters the body shortly after conception takes place. It alights on the food of which the pregnant woman partakes and thus it enters the body.

The soul may depart temporarily from the body:-

- a. As the result of fright.
- b. When awakened too suddenly from sleep.
- c. In sleep and dreams.
- d. As the result of being enticed by the soul of deceased at time of burial.

I do not think that these points require further elaboration, for with the possible exception of 'c', they have received frequent mention in the course of the present thesis. It is the opinion of the Kaws that the soul in dreams leaves

the body and wanders. If in his sleep he should see, as he does sometimes, the soul of a departed villager, it is a reason for his thinking that during his dream his soul entered the spirit world. In sleep the soul leaves the body and sees and meets with friends and things.

When the soul temporarily vacates the body, its period of absence may be of short or of long duration, and therefore it is believed that it makes short and long distance flights. When it has been determined that the soul has flown from the body of a living person, the coaxing of it back to re-inhabit the body, is said to be accomplished by offering to it attractively prepared food and clothing and by promising it pleasant companionships. Upon its return it is safely secured within the body by tying cords around the wrists of its owner.

Again the soul of an individual may become short. It may lose its weight and become lacking in some respect and the deficiency of soul definitely affects the physical health of him whose soul has shrunken. But it may be supplemented and restored to its proper weight and length by joining to it the soul of a pig.

After a Kaw seer has made an offering of a fowl and an egg, at which time she asks "Ahpimiyeh"-supernatural power- to descend upon her, the soul leaves her body and goes to the spirit-world or land of souls, to discover which spirit if any has been offended by her patient. At the moment of the soul's departure, she falls into a trance and her body seems as if it were dead.



It is revived a few minutes later when her soul returns from its adventure. During these excursions into the spiritual realm, the spirit of a seer is afraid of coming in contact with the souls of unnamed infants.

We now come to the discussion of the life of the soul as a distinct entity after the death of the body. First of all it is to be noted that animists think there is a definite locality or world in which spirits continue to exist. It is a country very similar to their present world where living conditions are much the same, the chief difference being that in the soul-world there is a cessation of toil. Some Kaws say that the soul has to do nine kinds of work, while it is the opinion of the Lahus that the souls of men continue to do the same kind of work they were accustomed to do in the present world. The idea of some is that the land of souls is a very distant place. While there are those who think that the soul enters this spirit-world immediately after death, there are others who say that it experiences nine migrations into various animal forms before it gains an entrance into the spiritual sphere, and during this transmigratory period relatives of the deceased are forbidden to hunt lest they might shoot the soul in some animal form. It seems, however, to be the general practice of seers to give instructions to the souls of the deceased as to how they may obtain an entrance to the other world. In the soul-land there are two rivers, one is clear and the other is red. If the soul should drink the water of the latter stream, it would be inflicted with

dysentery. The Kaws say there are six abodes of souls, as follows:-

1. Place of good souls.
2. Those who have died of small-pox.
3. Of infants who have died unnamed.
4. Tiger-bitten people and those who die of fatal accidents.
5. Insane people.
6. Murderers and tattooed persons.

The souls of the above classes of people fear each other and their bodies are not buried in the same way or in the same cemetery. The other races hold similar views with regard to those who die violent deaths or who die from fearful diseases. Their polluted bodies seem to defile their souls so that in the next world they must live as unclean beings without the bounds of the locality wherein dwell the spirits of those who die normally.

Some souls become domestic nats and altars are set up in the households for their worship. Such spirits are generally regarded as benevolent and protective and though their disposition is thought to be good, nevertheless they are capricious and may do injury to the family, especially if it should neglect to make the regular offerings of food.

Other souls become biting spirits and are thought to be wholly evil in their disposition, as for instance the soul of a tiger-killed person is regarded as being very malignant. The corpse of such an unfortunate individual is either buried

at once in the jungle or if arrangements are made by the relatives of the deceased to redeem his soul, the body cannot be brought into the village for normal burial, until prolonged sacrifices have been made to the offended spirits.

The souls of those who die abnormal deaths may be redeemed. There is redemption for the souls of those who die in child-birth and in fatal accidents, if the relatives desire to send their souls to the happy abode of ancestors, and provided they are willing to make the required sacrifices to secure their redemption.

A soul may return to re-animate a corpse and because this belief persists among the Kaws, they have the custom of beating an iron bar at death to recall the departed soul of the deceased. It is said that the human voice does not penetrate nor carry as far as the dwelling place of souls but the sound of a beaten iron does.

Neglected souls, as evil spirits, return in the form of birds and insects to devour crops and to destroy cattle. Souls are not reborn in infants. The Kaws have a meal of separation between the living and the dead. The food consists of roasted meat and it is eaten at the grave. A small portion is given to the corpse when it is addressed thus: "As for you, you are dead. Therefore do not love us; we do not love you. Do not cause us once to see you". The Shans, however, as staunch believers in the transmigration of souls, say that the soul of the dead may be reborn in an infant. Mrs. Milne makes an interesting reference on

this point. She writes, "When a child is old enough to point with its little hands, its mother takes it outside the house, asking, 'Baby, where did you come from?' If it turns and points to the door of the house, then the mother is sure that the spirit of her baby has already lived there-----In our war with the Kachins a young English soldier was killed and his grave is in the middle of a Shan village. Soon after his death a baby was born, which when asked the usual question, pointed persistently to the grave, so the villagers think that the spirit of the dead Englishman lives in the young Shan."\*

According to animistic belief, it will be obvious from what I have already written, that the future destiny of the soul is not determined upon moral grounds but rather upon the accident of death, or the manner by which a person dies. The soul of a man of good moral life and character, should he be struck dead by lightning, would not be allowed entrance into the happy abode of ancestors but it would be destined to become a malignant and vicious spirit, homeless and disposed to do injury to the living. On the other hand if the case of a person of questionable moral character, should he be fortunate to die in a normal manner, his soul would likely be directed and conducted to the soul-house of ancestors. It is a fact that the Lahus, Kaws and Kachins, at the present time speak of and perhaps believe in heaven and hell, localities in which the good and the bad are respectively rewarded and punished but these ideas may be a later acquisition from their Buddhist

neighbours, the Shans. The traditional beliefs of the Lahus, whose standard of morals is comparatively high, seem to teach that habitual drunkards, opium smokers and polygamists cannot enter the kingdom of heaven-"Mvuhnawmahko"- or "G'uisha mvuhmyi" i.e. God's country.

The Lahu word for soul which animates the living body is "coha" and the corresponding word in Kaw is "shola" and in Kachin "minla". A Lahu ghost-soul is called "awha" and in its evil and tormenting disposition and activities it is called "ne". In Kachin the soul of a deceased person is named "Tsu". This kind of soul is sent to the abode of ancestors and is sometimes deified and becomes a household nat of kindly and helpful disposition when well cared for but resentful and disposed to revenge when neglected or disrespected. The soul of a woman who dies in childbirth becomes a "sawn" and that of a Kachin man who dies a violent death, a "Lasa" both of which are evil spirits greatly to be feared.

Animals have souls and one reason for killing them is that their souls may go with the spirit of the deceased. We have already observed that it is the present custom of some of these animistic peoples to set a pony free near the grave at the time of burial. Formerly it was their practice to kill the pony and send its soul to continue in the service of its deceased master.

To dogs are ascribed almost telepathic powers because of their ability to give warning of the approaching death

of their masters. When a dog sits on its haunches and lifts its head skyward and moans and wails once a day for several consecutive days that is a sign to its owner that his soul is in danger of making its final departure from his body and also a warning to him that it is his duty to care for his soul. At this stage the seer calls back the deliberating spirit which the dog has seen going in and out of the man's body and after the soul has been recalled, the bones of a fowl are read to determine whether or not the spirit has returned. If it has not returned a pig is slaughtered and the villagers are feasted at which time the soul is again requested to re-inhabit the body and as an indication that at last it has returned the cords of witness are tied around the wrists.

### C O N C L U S I O N

In our observation of animism as found functioning in the lives of these races, we have observed a varied company of spirits which may be classified as follows:-

1. The spirits of ancestors.
2. Nature Spirits.
3. Independent spirits.
4. The spirit of demoniacal possession.

In the above classification I have not included the supreme Being, for it is my opinion that the eternal Being, especially of the Lahus and the Kachins is of a different origin than the spirits of animism and that he is a God of a far higher grade than the general order of demons to which animists make sacrifice. Number four could have been classed with number three but for the reason that the spirit of demoniacal possession stands apart so distinctly from all other spirits and also because the activity of this demon is thought to be different from all the others, I have given it special classification.

Spirits might otherwise be classified as either good or bad. The good spirits are acknowledged to be protective in their disposition and as guardian spirits they are chiefly concerned with the welfare of the household; confer blessings of physical health and prosper the

farmer with abundant harvests. Their dwelling is in the house; in the vicinity of the village gateway and in the sacred groves. When illness comes to the home or when the rice crop fails, such calamities are sometimes interpreted as an indication that the good will of the protective spirits has been transgressed. If it should so be determined, offerings would be made immediately to the offended spirits. Such offerings, however, are not costly, for the spirits of good disposition do not require large and expensive gifts. It is the evil and malicious demons to which costly sacrifices are given. I think it must be apparent that there are certain spirits regarded as being more vicious and more powerful than others and more greatly to be feared.

The "Meh Ne" and "Jaw Ne" and the spirit of demoniacal possession are the demons most feared by the Lahus. The Meh Ne, it will be remembered, is the demon that is held responsible for fatal accidents. It is regarded as being a very malicious spirit and the services of several Seers are required to drive this powerful demon from the district of its operations. The ritual ceremony of exorcism takes much time and the participants of the sacrifice must be careful lest the Meh Ne turn upon them. The body of the Meh Ne stricken person, unless the relatives of the deceased go to the expense



of a redemptive sacrifice, is not allowed a normal burial nor is his soul directed to the happy abode of ancestors. The Meh Ne fills the hearts of Lahus with a feeling of tremendous fear and awe.

Equally disturbing to a Lahu community is the spirit of demoniacal possession. Dr. Edward B. Tylor, in his great and classical work, "Primitive Culture", very correctly and excellently describes demoniacal possession "The possessed man, tossed and shaken in fever, pained and wrenched as some live creature were tearing or twisting him within, pining as though it were devouring his vitals day by day, rationally finds a personal cause for his sufferings. In hideous dreams he may even sometimes see the very ghost or night-mare fiend that plagues him. Especially when the mysterious unseen power throws him helpless on the ground, jerks and writhes him in convulsions, makes him leap upon the bystanders with a giant's strength and a wild beast's ferocity, impels him, with distorted face and frantic gesture, and voice not his own nor seemingly even human, to pour forth wild incoherent raving, or with thought or eloquence beyond his sober faculties to command, to counsel, to foretell—such a one seems to those who watch him, and even to himself, to have become the mere instrument of a spirit which has seized him or entered into him, a possessing demon in

whose personality the patient believes so implicitly that he often imagines a personal name for it, which it can declare when it speaks in its own voice and character through his organs of speech; at last, quitting the medium's spent and jaded body, the intruding spirit departs as it came. This is the savage theory of demoniacal possession and obsession, which has been for ages, and still remains, the dominant theory of disease and inspiration among the lower races." \*

While Tylor has accurately described the symptoms of demoniacal possession, I disagree with him in his calling it "the dominant theory of disease", for I seriously question if the Lahus and other animistic races of Kengtung State, regard the spirit of demoniacal possession as a disease-causing spirit. They do not, as Tylor does, classify it in the same category together with spirits which for instance cause small-pox and malaria. Whatever may be our thoughts concerning it, the animist seems to regard demon possession as something distinctly apart from the common physical ills. His attitude towards it and his treatment of it are different from his re-actions to the other spirits which cause, as he believes, his many diseases. Let us here note a few of those differences.

\* E. B. Tylor. "Primitive Culture". p.124. Vol II.

In the first place, demoniacal possession as we find it among the Kengtung Lahus, almost always takes the victim unawares in the form of a sudden seizure. The patient either quickly dies of the attack or he has an immediate recovery and when he does recover, there is not usually any recurrence of the trouble during the remainder of his life time. On the other hand disease-causing spirits almost relentlessly annoy an animist throughout the whole course of his life.

A second difference to be noted is this. In the case of ordinary illness a seer or priest by divination decides what evil spirit has been offended, but with reference to the demoniacal possession no divination by a seer is necessary. Both elders and youths, the laymen of the community can readily diagnose a case of possession. To make perfectly sure that their diagnosis is correct they sometimes subject the patient to a sneeze-test.

Again in the ordinary cases of illness a seer is required to make offerings to the disease-causing spirit but there is no offering made by a seer or by anyone else for that matter, to the spirit of demoniacal possession. They do on occasion place a bag of rice over the shoulder of the patient as the members of the community, shouting loudly, drive him from the village; but with this gift of rice there is not associated any emotion of worshipful

obeisance, neither is there any prayerful appeal nor any feeling of trembling fear and awe, such as are found present on the occasion of their making sacrifice and offering to other spirits which cause illness.

And lastly, ordinary illness is cured by prayer and offering of a seer but the spirit of demoniacal possession is driven out by cruel beatings. Pressure and not prayer; laymen and not priests are employed to exorcise the demon. These four differences lead me to think that the Lahus do not regard the abnormal state which demoniacal possession produces in an individual as a disease. He is certainly not treated as a sick person nor do they refer to him as being ill, but simply call him "Ne gehve" i.e., demoniacally possessed.

Tylor observes " that the possession-theory belongs originally to the lower culture and is gradually superseded by the higher medical knowledge. Surveying its course through the higher and middle civilization, we shall notice first a tendency to limit it to certain peculiar and severe affections, especially connected with mental disorder, such as epilepsy, hysteria, delirium, idiocy, madness; and after this a tendency to abandon this altogether in consequence of the persistent opposition of the medical faculty." \*This statement of Tylor's may be

\* Tylor "Primitive Culture" p.135 Vol.II

perfectly correct, but I think it is necessary here to make an additional observation.

The Lahus have in their own language words which quite adequately express and describe such afflictions as idiocy, epilepsy and madness, while they use, as we have already noted, a different term to denote demon possession. An idiot is spoken of as a "Nima ma bive chaw" i.e., a person whose mind is not full or complete - lacking something. Again, the word for epilepsy is "hpaw tave". Repeatedly I have had parents come to me for medicine for "hpaw tave" children. Mad or insane persons they describe as "g'uve chaw". Insanity is not prevalent among these peoples but occasionally we hear of a mad person in certain villages. The Lahus never use any of the above three terms to describe a demon possessed individual, i.e., "ne gehve chaw", nor do they ever speak of a "ne gehve chaw" as an idiot, epileptic, or mad man. This to me is sufficient and conclusive proof that they do distinguish between these three forms of mental disease and the abnormal experience which they call "ne gahve". Unhesitatingly they would say that idiocy, epilepsy and insanity are caused by evil spirits, but not by the spirit of demoniacal possession. The disease-causing spirits of idiocy, epilepsy and insanity only "che" i.e., "bite", whereas the action of the demoniacal spirit is to "geh" i.e., "possess".

It is here, it seems to me, that Tylor's discussion needs supplementing. He may have sensed the difficulty when he wrote these words:-"In illustrating the doctrine of typical examples from the enormous mass of available details, it will hardly be possible to discriminate among the operating spirits, between those which are souls and those which are demons, nor to draw an exact line between obsession by a demon outside and possession by a demon inside, nor the condition of a demon tormented patient and the demon actuated doctor, seer or priest."\* As I have already indicated, the Lahus, by use of the two terms "che" and "geh" readily discriminate between cases of obsession and possession nor would they hesitate to distinguish between a spirit that possesses a seer or medicine man and the demon that actuates and occupies the body of a raving demoniac. A seer, accustomed to habitual possession by his familiar and helpful spirit which he regards as power-imparting, would shun and in every possible way would try to avoid the experience of becoming possessed by the destructive, death-dealing demon of possession. No one, be he seer, priest, doctor or laymen ever desires to be demoniacally possessed but medicine men and seers desire and jealously covet the spirit which is accustomed to come to them with helpful, revealing knowledge.

\* Tylor "Primitive Culture", p. 125. Vol. II

I personally have never seen what the Lahus call a "ne gehve" person, but my teachers, both Karen and Lahu christian workers, have frequently seen in their villages demon possessed people. The possessed individuals have symptoms so similar to the cases of demon possession that are mentioned in the New Testament and this similarity confirms in their minds that demons do exist and that they are disposed to possess both men and animals. Jesus and the apostles exorcised the demons by rebuking faith and prayer; the Lahus and other animists drive out the demons by scolding, loud shouting and rods.

Andrew Lang in his "Making of Religion" devotes a chapter to the subject of demoniacal possession, but it seems to me that his treatment of it, is inadequate and incomplete for the reason that he has confined almost all of his discussion to that phase of possession by which the possessed individual becomes an inspired medium for the utterance of prophetic words. This inspired medium type may or may not be demon possession. At least it is not the form with characteristic symptoms similar to those of epilepsy or insanity, the type which Jesus cured and which is present among the animists of Kengtung. I think that a modern spiritualistic medium, such as Mrs. Piper, concerning whom Lang has written at great length, would resent the thought and avoid the experience of becoming possessed

by a vicious demon that ruthlessly enters the body, tears at the vitals, devours the liver and thus speedily attempts the destruction of life itself. The inspired medium is not regarded as being demoniacally possessed in the same manner as the demon tormented patient. The spirit of the medium is more or less refined; the demon of the writhing and raving demoniac, especially if it is the "Yaka Na" type, is uncultured, vicious and deadly.

This "Yaka Na" type appears to be a form of mental affection which is neither insanity nor epilepsy. The attack or spell is usually of comparatively short duration and may occur but once in the lifetime of an individual and before and after the seizure, the once possessed person appears to be, mentally, quite normal. While under the demon's control the patient reveals a second personality and is in possession of knowledge which he does not have in normal life. I know a blacksmith in a Lahu village who once was demoniacally possessed. My teacher told me that the villagers successfully exorcised the demon that possessed him. I have known this blacksmith for a number of years and he appears to me to live, think and act like any normal Lahu.

The "higher medical knowledge" to which Tylor refers has done much and will still do more to eliminate many superstitious beliefs and practices of animistic



races, but I still doubt if the findings of medical science to date, do fully and satisfactorily explain this type of demoniacal possession. May it not be that peoples living in the dark places of world who, as the apostle Pauls says, "Sacrifice to demons and not to god" (1 Cor. 10:20.) are especially susceptible to evil forces by reason of their trafficking in them?

The study of the different kinds of spirits has led me to the conclusion that these animistic people esteem certain spirits more highly than others. To their minds there is a gradation or scale of demons and those of highest status are regarded as being most powerful. The independent spirits, Jaw Ne and Meh ne of the Lahus and the Saun and Lasa spirits of the Kachins are, regarded, by these respective races, with greatest fear and awe.

Of the Kachin nature spirits, the demon of the thunder and lightning, i.e. "Mushen" is most highly esteemed. This is apparent from the elaborate and costly sacrifices which are offered to him. The Kaw people seem to regard the spirits of ancestors as being supreme. Their whole existence and prosperity in life seem to depend upon the "Myicha Ne" i.e., the altar in Kaw households on which reside the spirits of dead ancestors. We have elsewhere noted the close similarity between the Kaw words for God and deified ancestors, "Ahpi mi yeh" meaning supreme Being

and "Ahpo Ahpi", ancestors. The two terms are nearly identical and there is no doubt that many of the Kaws regard "Ahpi mi yeh" as being the spirits of their ancestors, while some of them speak of him as the creator of the world. That, however, is not our immediate concern here. What we do wish to point out is this, that the "Myicha Ne" with which the spirits of ancestors are definitely related, is the supreme thing in the religious life of the Kaw people. Should an individual of a Kaw village fail to conform to the prescribed forms of "Myicha Ne" worship or should he decide to abandon it altogether, he would automatically cut himself off from the tribe and he would be compelled to live without the gate. The "Myicha Ne" is not only the unifying principle of the tribe but it seems also to be the bond which unites the living with the dead.

With regard to the question of the supreme Being of savage races, opinion of scholars seems to be divided, Tylor and Lang for instance, represent two opposite views, the former being very decidedly of the opinion that man through a long process of evolution, gradually attained to his present knowledge of God. Primitive man's first and basal conception of supernatural power was a ghost-soul and from that original idea, he passed through the different stages of religious thought, fetichism, totemism, ancestor worship, polytheism and so forth until he eventually reached

the monotheistic level. Tylor believes that spirits were first and the supreme Being last. Lang, however, in his "Making of Religion" ably argues in favour of the opposite view, namely, that the supreme Being was first and the spirits next. Indeed he seems to think "that the supreme Being of savages belongs to another branch of faith than ghosts or ghost-gods or fetishes or totems, and need not be-probably is not-essentially derived from these.---- These two factors in religion-ghost and God-seem to have perfectly different sources, and it appears extraordinary that anthropologists have not (as far as I am aware) observed this circumstance before."\*

When I was making my first contacts with the Lahus, I was surprised to find what appeared to be, two distinct forms of belief, namely, the belief in an eternal Being and the belief in spirits. I have since learned that among other peoples of the world, the same two types of faith are found. It is an amazing feature of religion in the East, that two different faiths exist and are contemporaneously practised by some races, apparently without any sense of contradiction. Burmese and Shan Buddhism for instance are saturated with animistic practices, while the Lahus and Kachins, though they are ardent animists, are also monotheists.

\* A. Lang. Making of Religion. p.p. 185, 6.

From the secret, poetical language of the Lahus, in which their story of creation is related, we are informed that "G'uisha" is the sole creator of the universe. Heaven and earth and even the evil spirits are the creation of his omnipotent hand. The varied company of evil spirits are nowhere accorded creative power. G'uisha gave to Ca Nu Ca Peh, the first man of his creation, farming implements and paddy seed, as large as potatoes, and he also taught him how to make fire from the use of flint. In return for these gifts Ca Nu promised to offer the first fruits to G'uisha. After Ca Nu had sown his fields no rain came for a period of eighty-four days, so he went to God to ask for rain. In response to his request, G'uisha made his four black horses work very laboriously with the happy result that sweat dropped from their profusely lathered bodies as rain. Thereupon the stalks of grain grew as tall as elephant grass, but the crop failed to ear. G'uisha created a four-winged fly and set it free in Ca Nu's fields and this flying insect fertilised the grain. Amongst the now fast ripening paddy two pairs each of sparrows and doves of God's creation came and they ate of the grain but Ca Nu made a flute of bamboo to drive the birds away. He was very displeased that the birds were permitted to eat of the grain before he himself had eaten of it and in his anger he determined that he would not offer the first fruits to G'uisha. He resolved to offer to his plough handle instead, which

resolve he carried out.

The offended G'uisha sought to bring Ca Nu to repentance, but by clever scheming he seemed to avoid temporarily the different attempted chastenings of the Creator. Eventually, G'uisha created an evil spirit for the purpose of punishing him, but the evil spirit became very insolent and proud and desired to usurp the Divine authority. G'uisha spoke strong words to the proud usurper who at once became so conscious of his impotence that he went out from God's presence and died.

As there were no men that could be enlisted to aid in the discovery of the evil spirit's death-place, G'uisha created two crows to help in the search. On the morning of the seventh day the "kulima" bird was heard calling "ku-li-u, Ku-li-u" and from the same direction came the responsive call of the two crows. G'uisha sent his daughter to the spot and when she came upon the skeleton of the demon, she found that it consisted of seven ribs and two arm bones. She brought the remains home and from red thread she made intestines and from red cloth she formed a liver. Into the re-created body of the demon was implanted the spirit and thus it was revived.

G'uisha desired to discover if this rejuvenated evil spirit had power, so he subjected it to various tests. The demon was given permission to try and bend the bamboo.

At that time bamboo trees were perfectly straight and ridged. The evil spirit touched the bamboo and its now graceful curves are the result of his powerful touch. Likewise straight tree trunks and branches became forked; thatch-grass became sharp pointed; a small bush which the Lahus call "Ja" became thorny; the bear's head became bushy; the cow's head, horned and the tooth of the wild boar became yellow, and thus G'uisha discovered that the evil spirit had power.

Having been assured the evil spirit was present with power, the daughter of G'uisha reared a tom cat for the purpose of performing black magic on the irreverent and forgetful Ca Nu. She also sharpened two sticks of wood of the "Shawma" and "Ama" trees, the wood of which trees is the only kind used to-day by the Lahus when they perform black magic. Six additional evil spirits were created to complete the number of attacking demons and when she had collected these, the cat and the sharpened darts, she set off to a secret place to work black magic or "Ne pi hpfuh dave" on Ca Nu. The spirits did their work and presently the demon stricken Ca Nu fell ill. Helpless and sick, he went to G'uisha for medicine but God told him there was none left, for the sun and moon had taken it all.

About this time 'G'uisha' prepared or created a flying horned beetle which the Lahus call "Panu" and in

the horns of the "Panu" he deposited poison and he caused it to live in the vicinity of Ca Nu's rice field. Seven days later when Ca Nu visited his highland farm, he saw the Panu and as he listened he seemed to hear it say, "Mung Seng, Mung Seng, I have come to live in your salt mine" to which Ca Nu retorted angrily and said, "I do not know where a salt mine is, so how can you go there?" and with his big hand he struck the Panu to the ground and trode upon it. The poisoned horn of the insect entered his foot, his infected limb became swollen and festered and ultimately caused his death.

G'uisha regretted that there was no one to mourn the death of Ca Nu, so he made two birds which the Lahus call the "Pe o lo" and the "Po ko Lo" and also the Tavele (flying locust) to sing notes of consolation. The giant body of Ca Nu was dismembered and was buried by ant-eaters. His bones were ground to powder and scattered to the four winds and whatever his dust touched was cursed. Trees became thorny and creeping vines, poisonous; the blight of disobedience and death fell upon creation. The story goes on to relate concerning a second creation of man by G'uisha, male and female, to whom the Lahus give the names of Ca Ti and Na Ti.

I have related the Lahu story of creation in some detail but by no means completely to show, if possible,

how the Lahu regards his supreme Being. His conception is admittedly crude and when the ludicrous, confused and even contradictory ideas are allowed to fade away into the background of the pictures, there clearly appear in the foreground some outstanding and definite features and characteristics of the Lahus' G'uisha.

We see

1. That G'uisha is an omnipotent creator.
2. That he is a very human sort of God and his nature is not necessarily regarded as spirit.
3. That he is prior to and is greater than evil spirits, for he created them.
4. That he punishes those who disregard him.

Lang, I think, is perfectly correct in saying,

"We must try to get rid of our theory that a powerful, moral, eternal Being was, from the first, ex officio, conceived as "spirit" and so was necessarily derived from a ghost."\*

The mind of the savage is similar to that of a child.

Recently on an ocean-liner a little girl was seen, gazing about her cabin when a friend entered and asked the child of six years what she was looking for. "I am looking for God" the girl replied.

A few days previous to this incident, the mother had told her daughter in answer to a query that God was in the

\* A.Lang. "Making of Religion". p.185



cabin and with implicit faith the child had been looking and was expecting to see God in physical form. That the Lahu conception of an eternal Being has been vague and perhaps at no time exceedingly lofty is apparent from some of their present day notions. Periodically there appears among the Lahu people, a G'uisha. I have already referred to "Maheh G'uisha" of the Mung Hsat district of Kengtung State. Maheh was a Lahu Shi man to whom many Lahus attached the name of deity, because of his claims as a miracle worker. He was a faith healer and it was published abroad that he cured lepers and opium addicts. This tendency of the Lahus to ascribe deity to false prophets that periodically arise in their midst, leads me to think that they regard their supreme Being as a kind of super-man, possessed of supernatural powers. He is a God of a very human sort, a father who lived and talked with man, but by breach of tabu, he found it impossible to live with disobedient man and so he separated himself and withdrew from the earth and went to his heavenly abode. The Lahus still expect G'uisha to return and live with them.

I am inclined to the opinion that G'uisha belongs to a different order than that of ghosts, for the Lahus never refer to him as "awha" which is their word for **ghost**. There are the three terms, "G'uisha", "awha" and "ne". Neither "awha" nor "ne" are used as equivalent terms for

G'uisha nor is G'uisha ever used as a substitute expression for either "awha" or "ne". "Awha" is the ghost-soul that survives the death of the body and "ne" is spirit or demon. Perhaps a derivation of the word G'uisha has never been seriously attempted, but it seems to me to be a compound of two words, "G'ui" and "sha". I think in this instance "G'ui" means "living". The Lahus speak of "ika g'ui" and "ika" means "water", so "ika g'ui", is active, living water. The word "sha" is "breath". A dead man is spoken of as a "sha leh peu" or breath-finished-man. Therefore a possible name for G'uisha is, "Living Breath". Be that as it may, there is certainly no doubt that the Lahus regard G'uisha as the creator and giver of life, whose own nature has not tasted of death and neither is he disposed to death. They address him in prayer as the "Co Co Tai Tai Awpa G'uisha" i.e., "Eternal Father God". Perhaps their present conception of the supreme Being is less clear than formerly because of the unavoidable blending of animism with their monotheistic ideas and also because of the influence of Buddhism. The Lahus have been in intimate touch with the Buddhist Shans and there is sufficient reason for believing that whatever there is in the Lahu religion that is suggestive of polytheism, is of comparatively recent acquisition. Though there are traces of polytheism in some of his religious expressions, nevertheless the Lahu is decidedly a monotheist. I have already pointed out his use of the Shan term "Tevala", which the Lahu priest sometimes uses

as a substitute expression for G'uisha. Also the Shan gods that dwell in heaven and earth occasionally appear in Lahu prayers. That Lahu religion should be so influenced by their more powerful Shan neighbours, who are both Buddhists and Animists, is something we might very naturally expect. One fact we are sure of that the Lahus have kept alive their belief in G'uisha and that this form of faith is distinctly separate from and is apparently of a different origin than their belief in spirits or demons. Not only is there a difference in origin, but there is also a very noticeable difference in the method of worship. For the worship of G'uisha, the Lahus build their hut-temple or "Bonyeh", which seems to be necessary, but no temple is required for the propitiation of spirits. The offerings and sacrifices to the demons are executed in the mysterious jungles, at the base of trees, before huge rock boulders, at the river bank, in the rice field, on the mountain top, near the village gateway and sacred grove and on the house altar.

As it is with people so is it frequently with religion, the worst and least sacred side appears conspicuously, while the good feature often lies obscure and hidden. The casual observer would probably class the Lahus, as animists, pure and simple. A hasty acquaintance with their religious beliefs and practices would not readily reveal the purer element of their faith, which is sometimes monotheism.

Monotheistic belief and worship of G'uisha have been strong factors in enabling the Lahus to attain to a

comparatively high moral standard. Of all the races of Kengtung, I think, they are morally the most elevated, and in my estimation, it is their monotheistic beliefs rather than their animistic tenets that supply the ethical motive. Tylor says, "Savage animism is almost devoid of that ethical element which to the educated modern mind is the very mainspring of practical religion. Not as I have said, that morality is absent from the life of the lower races. Without a code of morals, the very existence of the rudest tribe would be impossible----- but these ethical laws stand on their own ground of tradition and public opinion comparatively independent of the animistic beliefs and rites which exist behind them. The lower animism is not immoral it is unmoral."\* I agree with Tylor in thinking that savage animism is almost devoid of the ethical element, but on the other hand, I believe, that savage monotheism, which may have been prior to animism, was latently replete with ethical principles. Tylor states that "tradition and public opinion" and not animism are the sources of the ethical laws of primitive man. I think it is necessary to go a step further and ask from whence did these "traditions" come and how was "public opinion" created and maintained? From our study of Lahu traditions, which teach both religion and ethics, it is apparent that the source of their ethical laws is monotheism. The same laws that prohibit idolatry--there is no trace of idolatry among the Lahus-- also prohibit adultery, theft and

\* Tylor Prim.Cul. p.360 vol.ii

murder. The age-long worship of this moral, eternal Being, "G'uisha", who imparts and gives his divine approval of these ethical laws, has been the principal contributing factor in the creation and maintenance of public opinion which has been a constant check to immoral conduct. Previous to the appointed times for the worship of G'uisha, the Lahu villagers must refrain from deceit and lying. The quality of the God that is worshipped is reflected in the type of moral character that worship evolves.

Of course, if monotheism is of later development than animism, then these ethical laws are of a correspondingly later evolution. However, I am inclined to the opinion that animism is a degenerate type of religion and that it joined itself with tenacious grip, in the form of a parasitical growth, to the already planted and growing tree of monotheism. The animistic parasite grew both profusely and rapidly, and quickly enveloped the trunk of monotheism and almost hid it completely. Just as it seemed to require the constant and vigilant efforts of a comparatively few leaders in Israel to prevent the national faith in Jehovah from becoming submerged by the gods of neighbouring peoples, so also may have been the experience of other monotheistic races. It is quite possible and may be probable, that in all the past history of the Lahu race, there have been members of the tribe who have been devout believers in G'uisha, even as we find, to-day, in every Lahu community, a few individuals of good moral character,

who are versed in the traditional knowledge of G'uisha and who encourage the rest of the community in the worship of the eternal Being. Concerning such leaders the words of Milton might be fittingly quoted:-

"Ev'n them who kept thy truth so pure of old

When all our Fathers worship't Stocks and Stones." \*

Those men are the custodians of the knowledge of G'uisha and it is only after long acquaintance with them that they show a disposition to divulge their theological views. It is only the student of the inner, hidden language of the Lahus that comes to know that they are believers in a supreme Being. That they obtained their ideas of "G'uisha" from christian missionaries or from any other European is unsupportable. The belief in an eternal Being is so deeply entrenched in the religious thought and life of so many primitive peoples, the world over, that it is difficult to imagine that missionaries have been the successful disseminators of such knowledge.

Tylor rightly says, "The main issue of the problem is this, whether savage animism is a primary formation belonging to the lower culture, or whether it consists mostly or entirely of beliefs originating in some higher culture and conveyed by adoption or degradation into the lower. " \* G'uisha is regarded as being of an infinitely higher status than even

\* Milton-On the Late Massacre of Piemont.

\* Tylor Prim.Cul.

the most powerful of evil spirits. If G'uisha is a development from the spirits of Lahu animism why are the links in the evolutionary process not traceable? The evidence seems to show that G'uisha and evil spirits are of distinct and separate origin. Again, if G'uisha is the latest development in Lahu religious thought he ought now to be worshipped more than the spirits of animism; he ought to be the recipient of more offering and sacrifices; but such is not the case. At the present time animism is strongly in the foreground of Lahu religious belief and practice, whereas G'uisha is kept in comparative obscurity. The offerings and sacrifices to the demons are of almost daily occurrence, but the worship of G'uisha in the hut-temple is confined to appointed times.

Which was first? If the supreme Being was first how did savage man receive this knowledge of God? Was it by revelation or did God bestow upon man and implant within him a religious nature and a spiritual instinct that led man to discover God, as instinctively and as unmistakeably as a new born lamb knows its ewe? And further, when eventually he did find God, did the pathway of discovery lead through the winding and tangled maze of animatism, fetichism, totemism, nature and ancestor worship and polytheism, until finally he came to the knowledge of the supreme Being? Menzies says, "If man's nature is essentially religious, then all that constitutes religion must have been with him from the first in however unconscious and undeveloped form."\* May it not be

\* Menzies History of Religion. p. 46

that primitive man, made in the image of God, from the very beginning of his earthly life or "from the first" did have some sense of God and that during the long ages until now, through retrogression and progression, to searching man the infinite personality of God has been and is being gradually unfolded. The apostle Paul was decidedly of the opinion that primitive man, "from the first" did have the knowledge of the supreme Being, but his ingratitude and pride led him away from God and as a result, his spiritual powers of apprehension became dull and inactive. The heart of man originally intended to be the reflector of God's effulgent light became, as the result of his waywardness the dwelling place of the demons of darkness. "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but because vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." (Romans 1:21)

This statement of the apostle sums up concisely what the Lahu religious traditions teach concerning G'uisha and concerning man's relation to him.

The majority of missionaries who have spent their lifetime among primitive peoples are of the persuasion, I think, that animism is a degenerate form of religion and that "it consists mostly or entirely of beliefs originating in some higher culture." On the other hand eminent men like Tylor are very decidedly of the opposite opinion. Some anthropologists go a step further back than Tylor and assert that there was a pre-animistic stage, at which time living nature itself, was



the object of worship, and not a spirit nor a personality conceived to be dwelling in it. Such great scholars are persuaded that it was through the successive stages of animatism and animism that man passed and gradually evolved the idea of God. This viewpoint is most reasonably and exhaustively set forth in Tylor's classic, "Primitive Culture". However, I am reluctant to accept his conclusion, for I do not think the evolutionary theory of the origin of religion can be effectually established as a scientific truth, on the basis of our present knowledge. There is much evidence in favour of the theory but it is not sufficient. Indeed, there is some evidence in favour of the opposite view, namely, supreme Being first and demons later. We know so little about the origin of religion, but a further scientific study of primitive peoples by men who choose to live with them and who know their language, may result in the production of needed data. Until this necessary evidence is forthcoming, it would seem to me, that the evolutionary theory of the origin of religion should be regarded only as a working hypothesis. I do not regard the Lahu religious traditions alone as sufficient evidence to effectually oppose the evolutionary theory. It should be clearly recognized, however, that those traditions do very strongly indicate that "from the first" God was present as creator; that he made himself known to man; that man was in fellowship with God, that his irreverent act disturbed that fellowship; that evil spirits, degeneration and death followed. If the careful study of the religious

traditions of a multitude of races were to reveal data, similar to that which the Lahu traditions seem to show, such an accumulated mass of evidence would lead to the abandonment of the evolutionary theory of the origin of religion and to the acceptance of what has been called the "old degeneration theory".

In concluding this thesis, it is fitting to summarise briefly, the worthy and less worthy features of religion as found among these animistic peoples. It should be kept in mind, however, that some of the virtues enumerated may be due to their prevailing monotheistic belief and worship.

Their faith in a spirit-world has created in their minds a sense of reverence and this virtue of reverence is reflected in the respectful attitude which youth shows towards the village Chief and the elders of the community. An accompanying grace is that feeling of dependence upon supernatural aid. Though animists know their jungle and their immediate environment, still, nature baffles them and they are driven to their knees with a feeling of helplessness and humility. The powers with which they contend are realised to be infinitely greater than themselves and in their hard struggle to keep soul and body together, they feel their dependence upon supernatural aid. It is an essentially spiritual world in which animists live and move and the manner in which they relate themselves to that spiritual environment largely determines either their failure or success in life. Sometimes they feel under necessity

to employ a clever seer who in the presence of the offended spirits can successfully plead their cause and regain the favour of the demons, for not until they have re-established themselves in the good will of the spirits, can they hope to go in the pathway of health and prosperity.

Animism has helped to preserve, perhaps in a crude way, the belief in the immortality of the soul, for the animist is a thorough believer in the survival of the Ghost-soul. It survives the death of the body and is indestructible. He regards it as being material in substance and similar in appearance to the body that it has vacated. When the body dies the soul returns to its home. "Kaw-e peu" or "gone home", is the expression which the Lahu sometimes uses, when he refers to death.

They have, too, a belief in a form of judgment after death- a disciplinary purgatory through which the soul has to pass before it reaches its final dwelling place. This belief seems contradictory to their more general faith, implied if not definitely expressed, that the future happiness of the soul is dependent upon the accident of death. That is to say, irrespective of the moral character of an individual, if he should die a normal death, his soul would be safely conducted to the happy abode of ancestors, whereas a man of good moral character, should he die as the result of tiger bite or from any other form of accidental or abnormal death, the soul of such a man would not be allowed entrance to the happy spirit-world.

The acquisition of the moral and ethical values of life do not seem to be the immediate objective of his faith and practice, expressed in prayer, offering and sacrifice. He rather seeks the material gifts of life, the securing of which he thinks will satisfy him. He desires to be in the good favour of the spirits; he wants physical health both for himself and his family and he wishes long life-"black hair nine times" as the Lahu expresses it. He longs to be a successful hunter; a powerful warrior and a prosperous cultivator. He appeals for protection for his crops and for his household and to secure these ends, he prays to "G'uisha", wears charms, resorts to magic and offers sacrifice to spirits. He is sometimes concerned about the future happiness of the soul of a relative who has been killed accidentally and his concern will constrain him to make a costly redemptive sacrifice to secure for the corpse a normal burial and for the soul a happy entrance into the next world.

The harvest festivals attest the fact that animistic peoples have a sense of gratitude. Nor are they lacking in the spirit of hospitality, even to strangers. They have frequently little to give but what they have they seem willing to share.

Immorality, theft and murder are punishable crimes and though the offender may not have any deep sense of sin, still there is a tense feeling in the members of the tribe that an injustice has been committed and that adjustment

is necessary by the imposition of fines upon the guilty. The marriage bond is held in honour and if a man were to marry a second wife, while he still lived with his first one, it could not be done without some sense of shame. In the case of a Kaw who becomes a polygamist, he has to "meh suhve" i.e., "wash the face" of the parents of his first wife, by paying to them a stipulated sum of money.

While there are commendable and worthy features in the monotheistic and animistic beliefs and practices of these races, it remains to be seen that animism has some very serious defects.

Animism is a religion of rigorous prohibitions, whereby the authority of the tabu system is upheld at whatever cost. All religions have their laws, prohibiting certain actions some of which are essential and praiseworthy, but laws of tabu that stifle individual opinion and discourage freedom of individual action, may and do become a menace to the community. The Kaw parents are compelled to kill their new born twins, whether or not they desire to preserve their lives. Here is an instance of the cruelty of the tabu system. The individual is frequently sacrificed and submerged by a mass of social and religious laws, the primary concern of which is to secure the welfare of the community. While the objective sought is praiseworthy, the methods used to secure those ends are often to be condemned.

Animism encourages a form of bribery. The good

favour of spirits may be secured by gifts and offerings, after the same manner as the good will of a village chief may be obtained by means of a gift. The inculcation of this practice of bribery of the spirits has doubtless had a psychological re-action in the life of the people and in the tribunals of the land, where law and justice and not bribery are expected to prevail.

Straight-forward honesty could not be regarded as an outstanding characteristic of animistic peoples. On the contrary there seems to be a strong disposition to deceive. One of the most common expressions of the Lahus is, "he pui ve", i.e., disposed to deceive or lie. Deception of the spirits is a common daily practice. This is seen in their offerings and sacrifices when part for the whole or a cheap substitute for the reality is presented as a gift. Clay puppets of all kinds of domestic animals and even of men are offered to the spirits as being actual animals and men. Such practised deception is reflected in other relationships of life and is a determining factor in making the Lahus and other animistic tribes "he pui ve" people. Though the medicine man or Lahu "shepa" may and does sometimes perform a helpful healing service for the sick, still, it has to be admitted, I think, that jugglery and deception are part of his chief stock in trade.

A type of selfishness is a characteristic feature of animism. So long as the individual or a community gets rid

of a troublesome evil spirit, it seems to be no concern of that person or village, to what individual or to which community the demon goes and enters. The immediate and consuming interest is to cause its speedy departure. The banished witch has to live somewhere, but the villagers do not care nor trouble themselves concerning the district in which the witch may choose to make his new home, provided the chosen locality is far distant and not within striking range of their own community.

The unlucky persons who are branded as witches have meted out to them unkind and cruel treatment. Industrious and law abiding villagers, for no reason known to themselves, are sometimes accused of harbouring evil spirits. Though they declare their innocence by repeated denials, they are ultimately forced by threats of murder and by other fearful warnings to abandon their homes. Homeless and friendless they are compelled to go to some distant and strange district to start life anew.

The practice of exorcism is an apparently cruel custom. The demoniac is severely beaten and frequently weeks must elapse before his bodily wounds heal. In justification of this seemingly cruel practice, it is only fair to say, that the exorcists have no feeling of hatred for the possessed person, for they think that it is the demon and not the individual that receives the thrashing. They are concerned to save the life of their unfortunate friend.

Cruel also is the practice of black magic, by means of which custom, hatred and revenge seek unlimited expression. Religion, be it either animistic or any other kind, that seeks to use its potentiality to gain an unfair advantage, even of an enemy, is of the lower culture and unethical.

Animism is a religion that tends to keep its followers in a poverty stricken condition. The burial sacrifices of the Kachins, for instance, cause poor families to become heavily in debt. The continual and unceasing round of offerings and sacrifices is a constant drain and becomes in time an almost intolerable burden on the life of the average villager. Animism does not raise the economical level of the people but rather has the tendency to impoverish them.

It is a religion of chance, fortune or luck rather than one of morals. The great issues of life are decided not so much on moral grounds, as on the basis of luck and good fortune. Neither is it a religion of knowledge and light; but it is a faith which thrives under conditions where ignorance and darkest superstition prevail.

Animism knows little or nothing concerning the constraining and powerful motive of love. I can easily be misunderstood here. I do not mean to say that animistic peoples are destitute of love, for they do have love and regard for one another and they do show kindness and hospitality to strangers. Indeed there may be and doubtless there is more faith, hope and charity, among primitive races than we have



been willing to concede. The apostle Paul, shipwrecked off the coast of Malta, said, "the barbarous people shewed us no little kindness; for they kindled a fire, and received us every one." (Acts 28:2.) We like to think that there is exceedingly more kindness than cruelty in all of human nature and that it is there innately. Be that as it may, I wish to say that the devotee of animism has no love for his spirits nor has he any sense or feeling of assurance of the demons' love for him. Love is not the compelling motive of his offerings and sacrifices; it may be hope, but I think it is fear. Doubtless the animist often makes his gifts with the hope that the devils will quit his home and village and never return to make his children ill. He desires by his gifts to keep the demons as far away from him as possible, for he fears their disturbing, annoying and disease-causing presence.

A writer in "The Evening News of India" says, "A French observer wrote years ago that quite ninety per cent of the masses of India live in perpetual dread of the machinations of devils, and spend half their lives in trying alternately to scare them away and to propitiate them in order that they may thereby be persuaded to relinquish their relentless pursuit of man, dogging his steps to misfortune and even to death."\*

Dr. R. R. Marett, in his interesting book, "Faith, Hope and Charity, in Primitive Religion", asks, "Is hope or fear the mother feeling in religion?"\*

\*The Evening News of India. Oct 27th '32.

\*R. R. Marett. "Faith, Hope and Charity in Primitive Religion." p. p. 21,

He undertakes to answer the question and says, "Fear is secondary to hope if equally fundamental in religion; its true function being to induce a needful caution, though in its craven form it is an enemy to strenuous living. Black magic illustrates this bad side; whereas its good side appears in those disciplinary terrorisms which religion employs in connection with punishment, whether hereafter or on this earth."\*

This thoughtful question and arresting statement of Marett's may cause students to review and perhaps may lead them to revise some of their preconceived ideas concerning the relation of hope and fear in animistic religion, for I believe that it has been generally thought that fear and not hope is primary in the religion of the savage.

Hope and fear are closely associated and seem to be inter-related. The former impels action; the latter frequently negates it. However, while fear is inhibitive, it is also stimulative; though it restrains, it also constrains to positive action.

My observations of functioning animism among the peoples of Kengtung State, have led me to the conclusion that fear is primal and fundamental in the minds of animists and that hope is secondary. This thesis has indicated that it is a fear of terrorism that induces the Kaws to destroy at time of birth their abnormal children; that it is fear of evil spirits that prompts fond parents to hang tiger teeth about

\* R.R. Marett. "Faith, Hope and Charity in Primitive Religion. p.p. 40.

the necks of their children, by which act they hope to preserve their children in health.

The entire round of human life and activity seems to be beset by fear. The cultivator fears the flight of the soul of his paddy and the consequent loss of his rice crop; the housebuilder fears to build his house on an evil spirit infested site; the entire community may flee to some new and distant locality because it fears the violent attacks of demons; the hunter fears to lose the benevolent "Na Ne" of his gun and the traveller dreads the malicious "Petummoi", the night prowler of jungle camps, and he also fears the spirits of the rivers which may cause his death by drowning.

I do not mean to infer that fear has entirely displaced hope in the minds of animistic peoples. In their environment, when face to face with the tangible and powerful enemies of the jungles, they show much resourcefulness, hope and courage. By various methods they have conquered their jungle opponents and they have succeeded in establishing permanent homes which are protected areas against the attack of ferocious beasts.

Neanderthal man, as he sat at the entrance of his cave and viewed in the valley a herd of wild animals, which was there one moment and might be gone the next, was compelled to think quickly and to act speedily, if his larder were to be replenished with meat and if his family were to have their wardrobe augmented. With his crude implements of

combat he stalked forth from his cave-home with the hope of slaying and conquering the wild herd. It may well be, as Marett says, that hope has won for primitive man a three-fold victory over the fear of fire, death and beasts: but in my opinion, he has not as yet successfully triumphed over his demons before which he frequently confesses himself to be defeated.

By methods of force or by circumvention, the spirits which animists dread, are beaten back or avoided. The employed means of escape from their troubling presence, be it by offering and sacrifice or by actual flight from a demon-filled locality, is accompanied with a feeling of hopefulness. They expect that the offering which fear induces them to make, will appease the troublesome spirit or they hope that the change to the new village site will free them, at least temporarily, from the disease-causing spirits.

It seems to me that animists, in their relation to the intangible world of spirits, have first and uppermost in their minds, the sensation of dread. It is fear that prompts the offering, if by its means they hope for release. They are held in the deadening grip of fear and never do they seem to effectually free themselves from its enslaving terror. In its craven aspect, it leads them into all kinds of superstitious practices and customs, some of which are destructive of life itself, in its good aspect, when it functions "to induce a needful caution", fear is constructive and impels them to have respect for both God and man.

There is much of faith and hope in animistic religion but its outstanding and dominant characteristic is fear. Christianity, the religion considered by many to be the most cultured and of highest development, has as its supreme message, LOVE. It is here that Christianity supplements animism and makes a unique contribution to animistic peoples, for the inculcation of the christian message of holy love and justice, does ultimately rid the animistic mind of craven fear and superstitious dread.

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In the tree to the extreme right of the picture, which is a 'Mai Hai' tree, resides the Lake Spirit, which is said to be the spirit of Wa Kang, the Wa Chief. The shed to the left is for offering. The trees are on the edge of the lake.



In this tree resides the oldest Nat of Kengtung, named, Sao Pa Kum.



The shrine of the Kengtung Market Nat, situated in the old bazaar site.





A Kaw gateway, showing at the left the two wooden images, Hkaw De and Bvuh Je; the bamboo woven 'Leo' and the wooden birds on top which prevent the entrance of evil spirits into the village.



A tree in which resides the guardian spirit of a Kaw village. Attached to the tree are the jaw bones of a dog and left of the tree is a thatch shrine where offerings are made.



New fence posts being placed in position around the 'Sai Mung' tree of Mung Yang District, by Buddhist priests. Here a two days animistic service is held yearly. Gifts are dedicated and prayers are offered at the base of this tree.



Large bamboo tray, laden with all kinds of gifts and puppets, after dedication before the 'Sai Mung' tree being borne away to the boundary of the Mung Yang District. There were four such trays carried on the shoulders of eight men.



A literate Shan layman who performed a leading part in the ceremony of the 'Sai Mung' tree, Mung Yang, Kengtung State.



Part of a Lahu hut-temple compound, dedicated to the worship of 'G'uisha'.





Lahu dancers in circular dance, playing gourd pipes.



Thatch-covered sheds built by the Lahus for the use of travelers, sometimes erected in connexion with the 'Bon teve' ceremony. (Karen and Lahu teachers in foreground).



Lahu Seer with tangled cords on his left wrist to keep the soul within the body.



This mountain, the outline of which resembles a sleeping giant, is situated seven miles from Kengtung town and it is called 'Loi Pit'. Here dwells the spirit of Ai Put.



Posts with a cross-bar, indicating an entrance to a village. Ropes and 'Leo' are frequently attached to such gateways to prevent the entrance of evil spirits.



Kachin altar on which was offered the first-fruits of harvest.



Tall bamboo pole with streamers in the midst of paddy flats, where offerings are made by the Shans to the spirit of the rice field. The teacher in photo indicates the offering cup.



This Shan servant is about to deposit by the roadside the tray of offering, decorated with four tiny flags. The spirits are pleased with such gifts, by means of the sick hope to get well.





Measured lengths of Bamboo poles placed against tree to secure the healing of the sick



Minature shrine on top of Tenasserim mountain range, in which has been placed offering-cup.



The Devali festival, celebrated annually at Loimwe by the Gurhkas. This picture shows the goat sacrifice.



The buffalo sacrifice to the Goddess Kali, the deified slayer and conqueror of earth's demons.





Small bazaar under the shade  
of the 'Sai Mung' tree in  
Kengtung town.



A Kachin Girl.



Kaw Girls.



A Kengtung Shan.